

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE
IN MANUSCRIPTS OF THE GOSPELS

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IN adopting for its own specific functions certain types of pagan religious structures, Christian architecture was able to acquire in more than one instance a degree of "iconographic content." When a pagan architectural type with fixed significations, such as the mausoleum of Roman Imperial times, was taken as model for a Christian baptistery,¹ an analogy was drawn between the traditional signification of the type and the new function to which it was put. The "allegories" thus established were usually rather apt,² and the parallelism of meaning between a mausoleum and a baptistery was peculiarly so, for among the connotations of the rites of baptism is that which associates it with death, burial, and resurrection.

This view of baptism³ is ultimately based upon the Pauline doctrine, most clearly expressed in Saint Paul's epistle to the Romans (6:3-4): "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." But there is an implication here, in the "newness of life," of a second view which also left its mark upon architectural "iconography" and pictorial art, particularly in the Latin West, though to a less pronounced extent and less obviously than the first. The second doctrine, which formed the basis for the Roman rites of baptism, is more clearly stated in the Gospel of Saint John (3:5): *Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu, non potest introire in regnum Dei*.⁴ Baptism as a *rebirth* is, in the Roman rites, so completely dominant in the *benedictio fontis* preparatory to the administration of the sacrament that hardly an implication of the Pauline view is to be found.

The seeming disparity of these views was, however, more apparent than real, for the two were reconciled if baptism was held to be a symbol of the stages through which a Christian achieved the life everlasting at the

N.B. The scope of the following investigation is strictly limited to the theme of the Fountain of Life in the particular Christian setting of Gospel-book illumination, its relation to certain other Christian monuments, the varying significations attached to it in its setting, and an attempt to reconstruct its Christian origins and early history.

¹ See R. Krautheimer, "Introduction to an 'Iconography of Medieval Architecture'," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, V (1942), 20-33, for an excellent summation of this relationship.

² The derivation, for example, of *martyria* (shrines of the Christian heroes) from the pagan *heroa* and funerary architecture in general is demonstrated *in extenso* by A. Grabar, *Martyrium* (Paris, 1946).

³ Texts reflecting this view of baptism are very extensive. Krautheimer, *loc. cit.*, gives a few selected references.

⁴ Since the English versions fail to render the idea of *rebirth* this passage is quoted in the Latin of the Vulgate.

resurrection of the dead. Theodore of Mopsuestia, for example, in his Commentary on Baptism,⁵ instructs the candidate with these words: "You should now proceed towards baptism in which the symbols of the second birth are performed, because you will in reality receive the true second birth only after you have risen from the dead and obtained the favor to be in the state of which you were deprived by death . . . You will therefore have the second birth at the resurrection."

In this paper the attempt will be made to demonstrate the ways in which these two concepts of baptism, sometimes separately and sometimes fused, underlie the symbolic content of the picture called "The Fountain of Life" which appears as part of the Canon Tables in certain manuscripts of the Four Gospels. We will begin with the second of the two ways of regarding baptism, that is, as a rebirth.

Archaeologically and historically, one of the most important baptisteries is certainly that of the Lateran at Rome;⁶ archaeologically, because there were three successive baptisteries upon the site, each of a different form. The earliest, a pre-Constantinian, rectangular building, utilizing parts of a domestic thermal establishment belonging to the old pre-Christian Lateran (and thus not strictly a baptistery as a type of building), was succeeded by the circular "Constantinian" structure upon whose foundations Sixtus III (432-440) erected the octagonal walls of the building which still exists. Whether the core of the existing font was built *de novo* by Sixtus, or whether in reality it belonged to the earlier, circular building, is still a controversial question.⁷ However that may be, it is by far the largest of all existing fonts, measuring almost 28 feet (8.5 m.) in diameter within its parapet wall.

Historically, this baptistery is of great importance, for it was presided over by the Pontiff of Rome and formed part of the Pontifical Palace of the Lateran and its great basilica. The imposing nature and dimensions of this font, where, according to an erroneous but firmly believed legend, the great Con-

⁵ *Woodbrooke Studies*, VI (A. Mingana, ed. and transl., Cambridge, 1933), 49.

⁶ Giov. Battista Giovenale, *Il Battistero Lateranense* (Studi di Antichità Cristiana pubblicati per cura del Pontif. Ist. di Archeol. Crist., I, Rome, 1929), is the official account of the investigations conducted between 1923 and the date of publication. For a reconstruction of the ambulatory walls and vaults of Sixtus' building which takes into account the archaeological evidence of footings for supporting arches at the eight angles, see A. Tschira, *Röm. Mitt.*, 57 (1942), 116 ff. and Figs. 2-3 reproduced by F. W. Deichmann, *Frühchristliche Kirchen in Rom* (Basel, 1948), plans 8a and 8b.

⁷ The director of the excavations and restorations, C. Sneider, was of the opinion that the foundations of the existing circular font were of a type of masonry similar to that of the circular exterior wall of the fourth century building. (Cf. Giovenale, *op. cit.*, p. 22.) Giovenale, on the other hand, attributes the font to Sixtus III (p. 43) while admitting points of similarity to the fourth-century circular wall.

stantine himself was baptized,⁸ were thus commensurate to its position of primacy among all baptisteries in the early Christian and medieval Latin world.

Despite some features which the Sixtine baptistery had in common with others of the same general type (the octagonal form of its exterior walls and an ambulatory surrounding the central domed space),⁹ it remained unique in one major respect: the entire central core of the building and its supports were in reality the canopy or *tegurium* of the font. This salient characteristic can be seen to best advantage in the sixteenth-century engraving of Antonio Lafreri (Fig. 23) which comes reasonably close to reproducing the conditions of the fifth-century building, as archaeological evidence indicates.¹⁰ The font can be said to consist of the great circular *piscina*, from whose borders rise the eight magnificent porphyry columns which bear an octagonal entablature. The latter originally supported a dome on a drum.

The three elements — *piscina*, the eight columns, and the dome — which go to make up the font of the Lateran, are found in pictorial art in the type of picture generally known as "The Fountain of Life."¹¹ Of this picture

⁸ The *Liber Pontificalis* and the *Vita Silvestri* refer to Constantine's baptism here. Cf. Duchesne, *Le Liber Pontificalis* (Paris, 1886), I, 174 and 192 n. 43, as well as his discussion of the sources for this legend in the Introduction, p. cix ff. As late as 1524 the legend was so strong in Rome that Francesco Penni, on the walls of the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican, painted the scene of Constantine's baptism as unmistakably taking place in the *lavacrum renascentis vitae* of the Lateran baptistery. Cf. Giovenale, *op. cit.*, p. 93, fig. 50. On the other hand, Eusebius, *De Vita Constantini*, IV, 61, 62, MPG 20, 1213 ff., states that the emperor was baptized at Nicomedia shortly before his death.

⁹ Octagonal baptisteries are too numerous to mention. Ambulatories around domical central areas exist at Nocera Superiore, near Salerno (cf. M. Stettler, "Das Baptisterium zu Nocera Superiore," *Riv. di archeologia cristiana*, XVII, 1940, 83-142, and pl. 2); Santa Severina, in Apulia (cf. P. Loiacono, "Sul restauro compiuto al Battistero di Santa Severina," *Boll. d'Arte*, 28, ser. 3, 1934, p. 182, fig. 11); Djémila (Cuicul), in Algeria (cf. E. Albertini in *Atti del III congresso internazionale di archeologia cristiana: Ravenna, 1932*, Rome, 1934, p. 414, fig. 2); Aix-en-Provence and Riez (cf. F. Benoit, Aix-en-Provence, in *Congrès archéologique de France*, 95th session held at Aix-en-Provence and Nice, 1932, p. 11, and G. Bailhache, Riez, Baptistère, *ibid.*, p. 75); Marseilles (cf. Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéol. chrét.*, XIV, pt. 1, 1114, fig. 10319).

¹⁰ Compare the treatment of the drum in the engraving with the measured drawing (Giovenale, *op. cit.*, p. 101, fig. 53) of the masonry of the drum as it was discovered to be upon investigation of the outer surface of the wall between the coffered ceiling and the roof of the ambulatory.

¹¹ For this and similar titles for the picture, see C. Couderc, *Les Enluminures des manuscrits du moyen âge de la Bibl. Nat.* (Paris, 1927), p. 50 and pl. XVIII, where it is called "La Fontaine de Vie ou le Puits Mystique." A. Goldschmidt, *German Illumination* (New York), vol. I, pl. 28, entitles it "Fountain of Life," as does J. A. Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, 1911), pp. 100 and 103. Leclercq, in *Dict. d'archéol. chrét.*, III, pt. 1, 709 calls it "la fontaine mystique" and "la fontaine d'eau vive." His illustration, fig. 2635, is, however, entitled "Le Paradis." Henri Barbet de Jouy, *Notice du Musée des Souverains* (Paris, 1866), p. 13, follows the dictum of M. le comte de Bastard d'Estang, *Peint. et ornem. des manuscrits*, in calling the picture "Le Puits Mystique."

there are four extant examples in Carolingian Gospel or Lectionary illuminations of the Ada School, as well as several whose identity as *fontes vitae* are less readily apparent (but which are clearly related to the former) in Georgian, Armenian, and Ethiopic books of the Four Gospels. The four Carolingian examples, with which we shall deal first, are used in two ways: two as full-page illustrations, and two within arches of Canon Tables. The two primary specimens which form full-page illuminations, with which we will be most concerned, are folio 3^v of the Godescalc Gospel Lectionary (Fig. 25: Paris; Bibl. Nat., nouv. acq. lat. 1203) written about the year 782 by the scribe Godescalc at the command of Charlemagne; and folio 6^v of the Gospels of Saint-Médard de Soissons (Fig. 26: Paris; Bibl. Nat., cod. lat. 8850), which may also have belonged to Charlemagne, although the earliest date that can be associated with it is its presentation to the Abbey Church of Saint-Médard at Easter time in the year 827 by Louis the Pious, along with a chalice and paten which bore the monogram of Charlemagne.¹² The fountain appears a second time in the Soissons Gospels, on folio 11^r in the arch of one of the Canon Tables (Fig. 29). The Gospels of Saint Emmeram (Munich; Staatsbibl., Clm. 14000, cim. 55),¹³ copying from Soissons, used the same fountain in the same Canon Table, again on folio 11^r.

The suitability of the title, Fountain of Life, that has come to be firmly attached to these pictures, especially to the two full-page illuminations, has never been clearly established; this and similar titles have been adopted in modern times through the sheer conjecture that the pictures may illustrate certain scriptural passages that refer to "fountains" or "living waters."¹⁴ Nor have any very precise meanings ever been established which would account for their forms and for their use in the particular contexts in which they occur. But one conclusion that we can come to immediately regarding the two full-page illustrations is that the fountain, whether or not it has any connotations of baptism, has a setting in Paradise or Eden always described in texts or depicted in art as a park (one of the Hebrew meanings of Paradise) full of true delights ("delight" being the meaning of the Hebrew word for Eden). Thus Paradise and Eden were thought to be filled with all kinds of plant, animal, and bird life, as our two pictures show.

Moreover, in view of the fact that some medieval writers state that

¹² Stephan Beissel, *Gesch. der Evangelienbücher* (Freiburg im Br., 1906), pp. 168, 177. A. M. Friend, Jr., "The Canon Tables of the Book of Kells," *Medieval Studies in Memory of A. Kingsley Porter*, II, 641, suggests a date for the Soissons Gospels between ca. 800 and ca. 814.

¹³ *Der Codex Aureus der Bayerischen Staatsbibl. in München*, G. Leidinger, ed. (Munich, 1921-1925), vol. I, pl. 21.

¹⁴ Couderc, Bastard, and Barbet de Jouy, *loc. cit.*, suggest Apoc. 21:6; Leclercq, *loc. cit.*, favors John 4:14.

there was a fountain in Eden, this paradisian element too may well have served as the type for the Carolingian fountains, whatever their significance may have come to be. The description of Eden in Genesis is sufficiently ambiguous to have permitted the assumption of its existence in that first abode of man where it was the Creator's intention that man should enjoy eternal life. On the one hand, Genesis 2:6 speaks of a *πηγή*, or *fons* as the Vulgate has it, that rose up from the earth "and watered the whole face of the ground." On the other hand the four rivers, according to Genesis 2:10, stemmed from one river which went out of Eden and watered it. This river was the source *qui inde dividitur in quatuor capita*. These two statements of Genesis served as the basis for the belief that in Eden there was a "fountain" and even a "fountain of life" which shared its waters among the four rivers.

According to the *Christian Topography* of Cosmas Indicopleustes, for example, "the fountain which springs up in Eden [Gen. 2:6] and waters the garden distributes the residue of its waters among the four rivers [Gen. 2:10] which cross over into this earth and water a large part of its surface."¹⁵ Theophilus of Antioch also says that "the whole earth was at that time [the time of the creation] watered by a divine fountain."¹⁶

But in admitting the possibility that the setting of the fountain in our Carolingian illuminations may be Eden, we must take account of the tendency to make an allegory of the placing of man in the garden of Eden as recounted in Genesis 2: 4-17. Philo, and after him many early Christian and medieval authors, adopted exclusively allegorical interpretations of Paradise,¹⁷ although Augustine, for one, objected to this practice while admitting that certain interpretations could be put upon Paradise "without giving offense to anyone" provided the reality of the earthly Paradise were accepted.¹⁸ The allegorical interpretation most favored by Augustine and many others would make of Paradise a figure of Ecclesia, or Christ and Ecclesia, and of the four rivers the representations of the four Evangelists.¹⁹

But Saint Ambrose²⁰ calls the fountain in Eden *fons vitae aeternae* and identifies it with Jesus Christ, *sapientia* and *fons gratiae spiritalis*. It may be significant, however, that the Carolingian theologian, Hrabanus Maurus, interprets Paradise as Ecclesia and the *fluvius* as "the image of Christ flow-

¹⁵ II, 117B, E. O. Winstedt, ed. (Cambridge, 1909), p. 83.

¹⁶ *ad Autolycum*, II, 19, MPG 6, 1081C.

¹⁷ Cf. E. Schlee, *Die Ikonographie der Paradiesesflüsse* (Leipzig, 1937), p. 29 ff. Philo, as did many Christian exegetes, interpreted the four rivers, for example, as the four cardinal virtues.

¹⁸ *De Civ. Dei*, XIII, 21, MPL 41, 394.

¹⁹ Augustine, *loc. cit.*; Moses Bar Cepha, *De Paradiso*, II, 7, MPG 111, 586.

²⁰ *Lib. de Paradiso*, III, 13, MPL 14, 296 f.

ing from His Father's fountain," bearing Christ's teachings and His sacrament of baptism: *Fluvius de paradiso exiens, imaginem portat Christi de paterno fonte fluentis, qui irrigat Ecclesiam suam verbo praedicationis et dono baptismi . . . Item allegorice quatuor paradisi flumina, quatuor sunt Evangelia ad praedicationem cunctis gentibus missa.*²¹

A delicate problem is presented by the poem *De ave phoenice*, sometimes attributed to the early fourth-century Christian poet Lactantius.²² Whether or not we today accept it as an example of early Christian poetry and think its content Christian, the important thing is that some authors of the medieval period did believe it to be a thoroughly Christian allegory referring to Paradise and the resurrection of the dead,²³ while certain medieval poets did not hesitate to borrow from it in composing their own allegorical works.²⁴ It would be quite easy to view the "far-off land" to the east as an allusion to Paradise and the references to Deucalion's ark and the primeval deluge in terms of the biblical flood, but for our purposes the important thing to note is that in the "far-off land" where the phoenix "lives renewed by her own death . . . there is a fountain in the midst, the fountain of life they call it, crystal clear, gently flowing, rich in its sweet waters."²⁵

Finally, in the Carolingian period the "fountain of life" itself became the subject of allegorical poems — the *Liber de fonte vitae* by Audradus Modicus,²⁶ for example. Although this poem does not clearly define the *fons vitae*, yet it was associated in the mind of the poet with the sacraments and their significance in the economy of salvation. Throughout the poem the two refrain verses recur: "Begin now with me, O heavenly Grace, the song of the eternal font, of the cup [*scyphus*] and the Paschal season."²⁷ The poem recounts the fall of man and his exclusion from the Fountain of Life, goes on to discuss the workings of the divine plan of salvation through

²¹ *Comment. in Genesim*, I, 12, MPL 107, 479C.

²² Loeb Classical Library, *Minor Latin Poets*, 650 ff.

²³ Mgr. É. Amann in *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, VIII, pt. 2 ("Lactance"), 2433: "l'inspiration chrétienne de ce poème n'est pas discutable." He thinks it possible that the source for the poem can be found in the account of the legendary bird given by Saint Clement of Rome (*Ep. I ad Cor.*, 25, MPG 1, 261 ff.) because the poem, in its description of the phoenix, follows Clement's version rather strictly. Gregory of Tours, *De cursu stellarum*, MGH, *Script. rerum merov.*, Ia, 861, speaks of the poem and ascribes it to Lactantius. Like Clement, Gregory finds the legend an allegory of the future resurrection.

²⁴ Audradus Modicus, for example. See L. Traube in MGH, *Poetae latini aevi carolini*, III, pt. 1 (Berlin, 1886), 70, n. 2.

²⁵ Verses 25–26. Contrary to the translation of the Loeb series, I have translated *fons* as "fountain" rather than "well."

²⁶ MGH, *Poetae latini aevi carolini*, III, pt. 1 (ed. L. Traube), 73–84. It seems probable that Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, also composed a poem of the same title. See Manitius, *Gesch. der Lateinischen Lit. des Mittelalters*, I, 347.

²⁷

Incipe nunc mecum, caelestis gratia, carmen
Aeterni fontis, scyphi, paschalis et horae.

the coming of Christ, and terminates with the answering of questions concerning Easter.²⁸

In various codices of the Carolingian period it is not uncommon to find verses, several of them attributed to Alcuin, in which the sacred writings there contained are called *fontes vitae*. This is true, for example, of the famous Book of the Gospels, the *Codex Aadae* of Trier;²⁹ the so-called Gospels of Saint Gauzelin in the treasure room of the Cathedral at Nancy;³⁰ and even in the Bible codices, Parisinus lat. 15176 and Vindobonensis lat. 1190.³¹ On the other hand, among the verses ascribed to Alcuin is one addressed to the Virgin in which she is called *fons vitae*.³²

From these literary sources we obtain varied interpretations of the Fountain of Life. To some it existed in Eden, to others it stood in Eden as an allegorical figure of Christ or Ecclesia. To still others it stood for the Virgin or the Sacred Christian Scriptures, especially the Four Gospels. Or, it connoted the Sacraments as symbols, in the present life, of the divine plan of salvation which will be achieved at the end of time. We shall see in what follows that many if not all of the above implications found in the literary sources are inherent also in the picture of what we shall continue to call the Fountain of Life. But let us see first of all whether the identity of elements in the baptismal font of the Lateran and the Carolingian examples of our picture carry with them more than a chance suggestion of a relation between the pictorial version and a baptismal font.

The most casual glance will reveal the very close relationship among the four Carolingian pictures, but more especially between the two full-page illuminations (Figs. 25 and 26). If we omit the backgrounds from consideration, and disregard some differences in the birds and animals grouped about the tholos-like structure, the only remaining distinction is that the later version (Soissons) treats the little building in a more descriptive fashion by rendering it in a pseudo-perspective. We are fortunate in this feature, for it removes any possible doubt that the two pictures present a basin of water surmounted by eight columns which in turn carry a small dome covered by a tent-like roof.³³ The barrier surrounded by the columns, in the Godescalc picture (Fig. 25), must therefore be interpreted as

²⁸ Manitius, *op. cit.*, I, 603, finds that besides being familiar with the *Phoenix* of Lactantius, the poet also drew from Virgil, Sedulius, and Isidor.

²⁹ K. Menzel, *Die Trierer Ada-Handschrift* (Leipzig, 1889), p. 3.

³⁰ S. Berger, *Hist. de la Vulgate*, p. 247. Cf. *infra*, p. 128, and Fig. 67.

³¹ Alcuin's *Prologus duplex*, lines 31, 32: *Hic vitae fons est, haec est sapientia vera, Hae sunt perpetuae namque salutis opes*. See *Biblia sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem*, I (Rome, 1926), 45.

³² MGH, *Poetae latini aevi carolini*, I (ed. E. Duemmler), 314, II.

³³ In the case of the fountains in the arches of the Canon Tables, seven columns surround a circular *piscina*.

a *piscina*, drawn in elevation, despite the suggestion of Strzygowski that the diagonally crosshatched areas represent lattice-work grilles.³⁴ This troublesome detail will be dealt with later on. Whatever the tholos might represent, its elements are precisely those which constituted the baptismal font at the Lateran. Are we thus entitled to regard the pool of water and its superstructure in our pictures as representations of a baptismal font?

There is another detail in these two major examples of the "Fountain of Life" that suggests a relation to the baptismal font. In the lower right-hand corner of Godescalc there is depicted a single animal of the deer family which can surely be termed a hart. The illuminator of the Soissons Gospels has introduced four very fine specimens. These might be regarded as mere adjuncts to a water scene or to a setting in Paradise, or dismissed as of no more particular significance than the other animals present in the pictures, were it not for the repeated association of harts with baptism in their physical use around fonts, and in literary and liturgical reference to them in conjunction with the rites of baptism.

In the list of bequests made by Constantine the Great to the baptistery constructed at the Lateran during the pontificate of Silvester (314-335)³⁵ is the entry *cervos argenteos VII fundentes aquam, pens. sing. lib. LXXX*. Such representations of harts, in silver, each weighing eighty pounds, must have been figures in the round. They were accompanied by a group of three figures: a golden lamb weighing thirty pounds, flanked, on the right, by the silver figure of Christ, five feet high and weighing one hundred seventy pounds, and on the left by John the Baptist, of equal size.³⁶ The group of three figures was placed *in labio fontis*, and it seems likely that the seven harts would have been so placed as to complete the composition around the font, thus making an eight-part composition of the sculptured figures.³⁷ From the absence, however, of any reference to a canopy over

³⁴ "Der Pinienzapfen als Wasserspeier," *Röm. Mitt.*, XVIII (1903), 199.

³⁵ According to the *Liber Pontificalis*. Duchesne, *op. cit.*, I, 174. For purposes of establishing the traditional use of harts in conjunction with baptismal fonts, it is immaterial whether these parts of the *Liber Pontificalis* were composed from contemporary documents or whether they were later interpolations. The *Lib. Pontif.* is evidence for such usage by the seventh or eighth century at the latest, and in all probability the custom was of much more ancient origin.

³⁶ Duchesne, *op. cit.*, I, 174: "In labio fontis baptisterii agnum aureum fundentem aquam, pens. lib. XXX; ad dexteram agni, Salvatorem ex argento purissimo, in pedibus V, pens. lib. CLXX; in leva agni, beatum Iohannem Baptistam ex argento, in pedibus V, . . ."

³⁷ Cf. Rohault de Fleury, *Le Latran au moyen âge*, Atlas, pl. 35, for a reconstruction along these lines. If Sneider is right in thinking that the circular font of the Lateran, with its eight niches in the parapet, was in reality that belonging to the fourth century building (see note 7 above), the figures could readily have been adapted to the niches; the water-spouting harts, on bases within the niches, could have occupied seven of them, and the golden lamb, which also spouted water, could be assigned, together with Christ and the Baptist, to the eighth.

the font of Silvester, and the explicit statement that some kind of superstructure or *ornamentum* not previously existing (*quod ante non erat*) was set up over the font in its rebuilding by Sixtus III,³⁸ it seems probable that the earlier font bore no relation to what we are calling the *fons vitae* as illustrated in the Godescalc and Soissons manuscripts.

The custom of placing figures of harts in context with a font was evidently quite firmly established in the early centuries of the Church. As part of the baptismal furnishings for the Church of Saints Gervasius and Protasius in Rome, Innocent I in the early fifth century is said to have given a *cervum argenteum fundentem aquam, pensantem libras XXV*.³⁹ A little later Sixtus III is said to have presented a *cervum argenteum fundentem aquam pensantem libras XX* to the basilica of S. Maria Maggiore, presumably as part of its baptismal furnishings,⁴⁰ while still later in the century Hilary presented three silver harts, each weighing thirty pounds, to the Lateran baptistery.⁴¹

None of these has survived, and it is not always clear whether they were full-figured animals or merely heads of animals used as water spouts. There is however the statement in the *Vita S. Venantii* in the *Acta Sanctorum* describing the baptistery at Viviers in France, and clearly indicating that a free-standing bronze figure of a hart was there used as a water spout, for it is said to have been "standing in the center" of the font.⁴²

The use of harts in this manner is not surprising in view of the relatively early association with baptism of the first verse of Psalm 42: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." It can only be this verse that inspired the painter of the frescos in the cubiculum of Abdon and Sennen in the Roman catacombs of Pontianus to introduce in the lower left corner the figure of a hart drinking from the waters of Jordan in an otherwise normal representation of the Baptism of Christ.⁴³ Saint Jerome, commenting upon this verse,⁴⁴ also makes the asso-

³⁸ Duchesne, *op. cit.*, I, 234. The variant occurring in some manuscripts for lines 19-21: "Hic fecit in basilicam Constantinianam *ornamentum* super fontem *quod ante non erat* . . ."

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁴² *Vita S. Venantii*, I, 4, in *Acta Sanctorum* (Paris and Rome, 1867), August, II, 108. Description of the baptistery erected at Viviers by Saint Venantius when the bishopric was moved from Melas to Viviers in the early sixth century. The text is in part as follows: ". . . quam [aquam] et per meatus plumbeos in altum respirans etiam aeneus cervus in medio stans evomebat" (this water a bronze hart, standing in the center, drew up on high through lead pipes and then kept spouting forth).

⁴³ J. Wilpert, *Die Malereien der Katakomben Roms* (Freiburg im Br., 1903), pl. 259, no. 2, where it is dated sixth or seventh century.

⁴⁴ *Breviarium in Psalmos*, Ps. XLI, MPL 26, 1006.

ciation with baptism: *desiderat venire ad Christum, in quo est fons luminis, ut, ablutus baptismo, accipiat donum remissionis*. Allusion to this verse from the Psalms is also made in the liturgy practiced at the Lateran when the *Sicut cervus* was sung, according to the *Ordo Romanus XI*,⁴⁵ as the pontiff led the celebrants in procession to the baptistery, on Holy Saturday, for the services of the Consecration of the Font and the administering of the sacrament of baptism. The relative antiquity of this custom is suggested by the fact that the oldest extant Roman sacramentary that preserves the services for the rites of baptism (the "Gelasian Sacramentary") contains the following prayer, offered after the reading of Psalm 41 (42): "Almighty everlasting God, look mercifully on the devotion of thy people who are born anew, who pant, as the hart, after the fountain of thy waters: and mercifully grant, that the thirst of their faith may, by the mystery of baptism, sanctify their souls and bodies. Through our Lord. Amen."⁴⁶ The reading of the Psalm and the prayer conclude the service on Holy Saturday in the basilica. The Sacramentary then adds this instruction: *Inde procedunt ad fontes cum litania ad baptizandum*. It was at this point that the *Ordo Romanus XI* informs us the *Sicut cervus* was sung.

A better indication of the antiquity of this custom is the specific testimony of Augustine,⁴⁷ in reference to the first verse of this Psalm. "Like as the hart, etc.' And indeed it is not ill understood as the cry of those who being as yet Catechumens, are hastening to the grace of the holy Font. On which account too this Psalm is ordinarily chanted on those occasions, that they may long for the fountain of remission of sins, even 'as the hart for water brooks.'" We are reminded of the mosaic pavement at Salona (Fig. 28), in the Consignatorium which served as entrance to the baptistery. In the floor immediately in front of the doors facing the baptistery were two harts flanking a cantharos and the verse from Psalm 42 inscribed above the animals.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Mabillon, *Musei italici*, II, 138; F. J. Dölger, "Die Firmung in den Denkmälern des Christlichen Altertums," *Römische Quartalschrift*, XIX (1905), 33.

⁴⁶ Cf. H. A. Wilson, *The Gelasian Sacramentary* (Oxford, 1894), p. 84. It is very probable that this sacramentary reflects the usages of the Church in Rome at a time not later than the sixth century.

⁴⁷ *In Psalmum XLI Enarratio*, MPL 36, 464, 1.

⁴⁸ W. Gerber, *Forschungen in Salona, I: Die Bauten im nordwestlichen Teile der Neustadt von Salona* (Vienna, 1917), Pl. II, III. Other examples of this motif exist in close juxtaposition to a baptismal font. One case is that of Stobi where an octagonal font occupies the center of a large apsidal room in a building which the excavators have termed the "Summer Palace." Immediately in front of the *piscina* is a panel of the mosaic pavement in which are depicted two harts flanking a central chalice and *pigna* from which jets of water are flowing. Behind each hart is a tree and between the chalice and the harts are two large birds. Cf. Mano Zissi, "Mosaiken in Stobi," *Bull. de l'Inst. Archéol. Bulgare*, X (1936), 293, fig. 184; *idem*, *Starinar* VIII-IX (1933-34), 253, fig. 12; Ernst Kitzinger, "The Town of Stobi,"

The presence, then, of the harts in our two Carolingian illuminations, together with the form of the structure and its similarity to the elements comprising the Lateran font of Sixtus III, strongly suggest that the basic conception of the picture somehow involves baptism, and that the columnar structure, possibly used as a vehicle of symbolic expression, shares the features of a baptismal font. However, in order to justify the title "Fountain of Life" and establish the identity of *fons vitae* and the font of baptism, we must, first, determine that a font is thought of and definitely called *fons vitae*; second, find that the font or *fons vitae* illustrated in the manuscripts is employed in a context of baptism. Finally, we must further define the term *fons vitae*, showing that it is not simply and purely a baptismal font, and see whether the iconography of our picture accords with those additional meanings. The fulfillment of this last requirement, however, cannot be achieved immediately, but will develop during the course of this paper.

To discover the first of these requisites, we need only turn to a study of the Sixtine rebuilding of the Lateran baptistery itself. The fundamental document regarding the fifth-century form of the building is the *Vita* of Sixtus III in the *Liber Pontificalis* where we find that the manuscripts of the text give us two versions. They are, however, not in conflict with each other, for one serves merely to clarify the other. Most of the manuscripts give this version: "He [Sixtus] erected the columns in the baptistery of the Constantinian basilica which were assembled at the time of Constantine Augustus, [the columns being] of porphyry stone, eight in number, which he set up with their epistyle and provided with verses."⁴⁹ The implication is that the columns and the inscribed epistyles were set up in this place by Sixtus for the first time, and, if it is borne in mind that the *Vita Silvestri* makes no reference to a structure covering the earlier font (which it describes in considerable detail), it can be assumed that the earlier baptistery contained no *tegurium*. The alternative version of the text, found in a few manuscripts of the *Vita* of Sixtus, is even more specific in this regard: "He [Sixtus] built an *ornamentum*, which did not before exist, in the Constantinian basilica, over the font: that is, he set up the marble epistyles and the

Dumbarton Oaks Papers, III (1946), 134 ff., fig. 193. This room of the palace must have been converted to use as a baptistery in view of the fact that adjacent to the palace was a building which was certainly a church. Another example in similar relation to the font is that at Butrinto in Albania (Northern Epirus) where the harts flank a fountain and, as a group within the same mosaic panel, are placed below the Cross crowned by an arch and flanked by two cypress trees. Cf. L. M. Ugolini, "Il Battistero di Butrinto," *Riv. di archeol. crist.*, XI (1934), 267, fig. 2; and 271.

⁴⁹ Duchesne, *op. cit.*, I, 234: "Hic constituit columnas in baptisterium basilicae Constantinianae, quas a tempore Constantini Augusti fuerant congregatas, ex metallo purpureo numero VIII, quas erexit cum epistolis suis et versibus exornavit . . ."

porphyry columns which Constantine Augustus left there, when he had assembled them; and he [Sixtus] ordered them to be erected, and provided them with verses.”⁵⁰ There is no doubt then that the *tegurium fontis* with its eight porphyry columns was introduced into the baptistery with the rebuilding undertaken during Sixtus’ tenure, and that it was at that time (i.e. 432–440) that the epistyle⁵¹ received its inscribed verses. These are still to be seen, *in situ*, to this day (Fig. 24).

If we now turn to these verses, we find that the baptismal font is indeed the *fons vitae*; for the sixth section of the entablature bears the distich whose first verse reads: *Fons hic est vitae, qui totum diluit orbem*. “This is the fountain of life, which purges the whole world.” That this terminology was persistently applied to the Lateran baptistery is evident from what is known of another distich, doubtless of later date, which was inscribed upon one of the doors of the same baptistery. It reads:

*Ad fontes vitae hoc aditu properate lavandi
Constantis fidei ianua Xps erit.*⁵²

There can be no doubt therefore, that in Lateran circles, after about 435, the Lateran font, at any rate, was regarded as the fountain of life.

The verses inscribed upon the font at the Lateran should now be more carefully examined; for although they have already served to identify the baptismal font as a *fons vitae*, it will be seen that other expressions contained in them will prove useful to a further understanding of the varying uses made of the picture in the Godescalc and in the Soissons manuscripts. Moreover, when the inscriptions are confronted with other related documents whose authorship is known, their evidence becomes useful in deciding the date of origin and the provenience of the illumination of the *fons vitae* in its guise as a baptismal font. The inscriptions consist of eight distichs, one

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, variant for lines 19–21: “Hic fecit in basilicam Constantinianam ornamentum super fontem quod ante non erat, id est epistulia marmorea et columnas purfyreticas eregit quas Constantinus Augustus congregatas demisit, et iussit ut erigerentur, quas et versibus exornavit.”

⁵¹ Actually part of a Roman Imperial architrave and frieze whose lower fascia was entirely cut away and whose back side was specially cut and molded to suit its reuse in the Sixtine baptistery and panelled to receive the verses. For illustrations of two of the inscriptions, see our Fig. 24. For details of the architrave-friezes and the more complete entablature used in the pronaos of the baptistery, cf. Giovenale, *op. cit.*, p. 97, fig. 52. For evidence of the origin of these and other spoils used in the baptistery, possibly from the forum of Julius Caesar, see H. Kähler, “Zu den Spolien im Baptisterium der Lateransbasilika,” *Röm. Mitt.*, LII (1937), 106–118.

⁵² Copied by the author of the *Sylloge Laurehamensis I*, between A.D. 821 and 846. Cf. Cabrol and Leclercq, *op. cit.*, VIII, part 2, 1567; E. Diehl, *Inscriptiones latinae christianae veteres*, I, fasc. 5 (1925), no. 1839, p. 362, where the verses are ascribed to Pope Hilary (461–468).

on the outer (ambulatory) side of each entablature. The verses, in their proper order, read as follows: ⁵³

- (a) *Gens sacranda polis hic semine nascitur almo,*
The city, a people to be consecrated, here springs into being from fruitful seed:
quam fecundatis spiritus edit aquis.
which the Spirit brings forth from impregnated waters.
- (b) *Mergere, peccator sacro purgande fluente:*
Be dipped in the sacred stream, O sinner called to purity:
quem veterem accipiet, proferet unda novum.
whom the water will receive old, but bring forth new.
- (c) *Nulla renascentum est distantia, quos facit unum*
There is no distinction among those born again,
unus fons, unus spiritus, una fides.
whom one font, one Spirit, one faith make one.⁵⁴
- (d) *Virgineo faetu genitrix ecclesia natos,*
From her virginal womb Mother Church gives birth in the stream to her children,
quos spirante deo concipit, amne parit.
whom she conceives through the breath of God.
- (e) *Insons esse volens isto mundare lavacro,*
Wouldst thou be pure, cleanse thyself in this bath,
seu patrio premeris crimine seu proprio.
whether thou art oppressed by original sin or by thine own guilt.
- (f) *Fons hic est vitae, qui totum diluit orbem*
This is the fountain of life, which purges the whole world,
sumens de Christi vulnere principium.
taking its course from the wound of Christ.
- (g) *Caelorum regnum sperate, hoc fonte renati;*
Hope for the Kingdom of Heaven, ye who are reborn in this font;
non recipit felix vita semel genitos.
the blessed life does not accept those who are born only once.⁵⁵
- (h) *Nec numerus quemquam scelerum nec forma suorum*
Let not the number or the kind of his sins frighten anyone;
terreat: hoc natus flumine sanctus erit.
born of this stream he will be holy.

It is to be noted that the inscriptions are overwhelmingly concerned with the doctrine that baptism is a rebirth (distichs *a, b, c, d, g, h*), although

⁵³ The sequence of verses used here is that of Dölger, *Antike und Christentum*, II (1930), 253, who made a point of ascertaining their proper order since they have been frequently published in conflicting sequence.

⁵⁴ Eph., 4:4-5.

⁵⁵ John 3:3.

allusions are also made to its cleansing power (*b, e, f*), and to Christ's Passion (*f*), though only rather indirectly.⁵⁶

There is one source in which are found singularly close parallels to the sentiments expressed in almost every distich of the inscriptions. That source is the writings of Saint Leo Magnus, particularly his sermons and letters.⁵⁷ The *polis* or *gens sacrande* who are born from the waters of baptism that have been impregnated by the Spirit, as distich *a* has it, are those referred to in Leo's *Sermo* 49:⁵⁸ "He [the devil] sees new folk from the race of all mankind introduced to adoption as sons of God, and he sees that children of regeneration are multiplied through the virginal impregnation of the Church."⁵⁹ The statement in distich *b*, that the water of baptism receives an old man and brings him forth new, is found in the seventieth sermon of Leo:⁶⁰ "Those whom the basin of the font receives as old men, the water of baptism brings forth new." Like distich *c*, Leo's expression in Epistle XV:⁶¹ *per sacramentum baptismatis Christi, in quo nulla est discretio renatorum*, refers to Galatians 3:27, 28. The second verse of this distich is recalled in *Sermo* 41:⁶² *Eodem Spiritu sanctificamur, eadem fide vivimus, ad eadem sacramenta concurrimus. Non spernatur haec unitas . . .* The role of Mother Church in giving birth to children, as expressed in distich *d*, has already been found in the forty-ninth sermon (quoted above) but is even more clearly set forth in the sixty-fourth: "It is He [Christ] himself who, born of the Holy Spirit from a virgin [Mother], impregnates his pure Church [by means of] the same breath, so that through baptismal birth

⁵⁶ The Lateran font is not the only one wherein the doctrine of baptism as a rebirth is recorded by an inscription. Upon the inner face of the parapet of the hexagonal font in the baptistery at Lomello in Lombardy, the entire verse from the Gospel of Saint John (3:5) seems to have been originally inscribed. Only the section of the parapet containing the last words — *in regnum Dei* — still survives. See G. Chierici, "Il battistero di Lomello," *Rendiconti della Pont. Accad. Rom. di Archeol.*, XVII (1940–41), 136 and pl. IV.

⁵⁷ Many of these parallels have already been noted by the late Franz Joseph Dölger, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁸ *Sermo* 49, MPL 54, 303A: "Videt enim de omnium hominum genere, in adoptionem filiorum Dei novos populos introduci, et per virgineam Ecclesiae fecunditatem, partus regenerationis augeri."

⁵⁹ Theodore of Mopsuestia, about the same time, explains the preliminary step — i.e. the Scrutiny — leading to the sacrament of baptism, as an enrollment in the hope of acquiring citizenship in the City in which Christ has His kingdom — i.e. the heavenly Jerusalem of which Ecclesia is a symbol in this world. See Theodore's commentary on the Sacrament of Baptism, *loc. cit.*, 23 ff.

⁶⁰ MPL 54, 382B: ". . . quos veteres suscepit sinus fontis, eodem novos edat unda baptismatis . . ."

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 685B.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 274B.

countless multitudes of children of God are born. . .”⁶³ A continuation of the very passage quoted from *Sermo* 49 gives us the parallel for distich *e* in which it is said that baptism will cleanse one from either original sin or one’s own guilt: *Nec obesse cuiquam vel proprium, vel originale peccatum*. Distich *h* is much the same as *e*. The idea that the water of baptism takes its course from the pierced side of Christ (distich *f*) is found several times in Saint Leo’s letters: “And then he established the power of regeneration when, from his side, there flowed forth the blood of redemption and the water of baptism.”⁶⁴

Thus almost every verse of the inscriptions is in accord with statements of Saint Leo.⁶⁵ Some of the verses are mere commonplaces whose content could be found in the writings of various authors. But a few of them are so rare in Roman sources that the close parallels between the verses on the one hand and the sermons and letters of Leo on the other lead one to the conviction that Leo must have composed the verses as well.⁶⁶

The fact that the inscriptions were carved before Leo’s accession to the pontificate in A.D. 440 need not militate against his authorship. It is well known that he played an important part in the affairs of the Roman Church even during the tenure of his two immediate predecessors, Coelestine I and Sixtus III.⁶⁷ He was far superior to either of these in literary, theological, and diplomatic ability, and even before he became bishop he was recognized as the leader of the Roman Church. It is not improbable that he also had much to do with building operations during the reign of Sixtus, as Jalland suggests,⁶⁸ and more than probable that he was entrusted with the composition of the verses, if not the whole architectural and iconographic conception of the new baptistery.

The expressions employed in the inscriptions have such a strongly liturgical ring that an investigation of a possible relationship between the sentiments of the verses and the liturgy celebrated within the area of the font seems warranted. Since Leo’s name has been firmly associated with liturgical compositions, it would be well to bear in mind the import of his verses

⁶³ *Sermo* 64, *ibid.*, 356B: “Ipse est qui de Spiritu sancto ex matre editus Virgine incontaminatam Ecclesiam suam eadem inspiratione fecundat, ut per baptismatis partum innumerabilis filiorum Dei multitudo gignatur . . .”

⁶⁴ *Ep.* XVI, *ibid.*, 701C: “Et tunc regenerationis potentiam sanxit, quando de latere ipsius profluxerunt sanguis redemptionis, et aqua baptismatis.” Cf. also *Ep.* LIX, 4, 871; *Ep.* XXVIII, 5, 775.

⁶⁵ In none of his extant works, however, does Leo use the term *fons vitae*.

⁶⁶ Dölger, *op. cit.*, p. 257, reaches this conclusion upon somewhat less evidence than that presented here.

⁶⁷ T. Jalland, *The Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* (New York, 1941), pp. 34 ff.

⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

with the object of determining whether or not any of the Roman liturgies of baptism that have come down to us correspond at all closely to what we may now term the Leonine views of baptism.

For this purpose the principal sources are the earlier sacramentaries. The earliest, however, cannot be dated before the seventh century, and scholars have become hesitant in attributing any of their parts to redactions of the time of Leo.⁶⁹ In the sacramentaries the rites at the font appear among the Easter services, on Holy Saturday,⁷⁰ and all of them begin with a *benedictio fontis* which precedes the administration of the sacrament itself. It is quite clear that the blessing employed in the *Liber Sacramentorum* ("Gelasian"),⁷¹ which differs somewhat from those in the other early service books, is the traditional one for use at the Lateran in Rome.⁷² Indeed it is almost identical with that appearing in the Vatican Typical Edition of the *Missale Romanum* in use today, Station at St. John Lateran. It is these prayers of the *benedictio* that contain the same imagery and thought that we have found in Leo's inscriptions of about the year 440. They were pronounced by the pontiff as he stood beneath the epistyle on which the verses are inscribed.

To facilitate comparison, each of the verses has been paraphrased below in the column to the left, and the equivalent expressions from the *benedictio fontis* have been placed opposite each verse in the column to the right.⁷³

⁶⁹ The so-called *Sacramentarium Leonianum* (Feltoe, Cambridge, 1896; Muratori, *Liturgia Romana Vetus*, Venice, 1748, I, 293 ff.; MPL 55, 21 ff.) is most surely not Leonine. It is apparently a non-official collection of Roman masses, "partly drawn from earlier sources, but . . . of an entirely private nature" (Feltoe, *op. cit.*, p. xvi). Cf. also Duchesne, *Origines du cult chrétien*, p. 145. The so-called *Gelasian Sacramentary* (edited by H. A. Wilson, *op. cit.*) is fundamentally a Roman service book into which have been incorporated certain Gallican elements. It remains, however, the best source available for the Roman services of the seventh century. Some of its parts may have been copied from much earlier texts. The *Sacramentarium Gregorianum*, *Missale Gothicum* and *Sacramentarium Gallicanum* (Muratori, *op. cit.*) are either later Roman service books or largely Gallican with some Roman admixtures.

⁷⁰ In the fragmentary *Sacramentarium Leonianum* these services are missing. The rites are repeated on the Vigil of Pentecost in conformity to an ancient Roman custom. Some churches within the domain of Rome tended to celebrate them also at Epiphany, as in the East, but the Roman bishops generally attempted to limit the service to Easter and Pentecost throughout the West. Cf. Leo Magnus, *Ep.* XVI, addressed to the Sicilian bishops, MPL 54, 695 ff. Siricius, *Ep.* I, *ad Himerium*, cap. 2, MPL 13, 1134-5, had previously made the attempt.

⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 84-86.

⁷² This can be argued from the excerpts quoted in the various *Ordines Romani*, where detailed instructions for the conduct of the service, but not the complete texts themselves, are given. Cf. *Ordo* I, 42, MPL 78, 956; *Ordo* VII, 10, *idem*, 999, where the opening phrases of the two prayers are quoted: *Omnipotens sempiterne Deus*, and *Deus qui invisibili potentia tua*.

⁷³ With slight changes, the translations of the latter are those of the *Roman Missal* (London, 1937). The page and line references are to Wilson, *op. cit.*

Inscriptions, paraphrased

- (a) The city, a consecrated people, springs into being in the font from fruitful seed.

It is brought forth by the Holy Spirit from impregnated water.

- (b) The sinner must be dipped in the water of baptism to be purified.

The water receives an old man and brings him forth new.

- (c) There is no distinction among those reborn (by baptism).

- (d) Mother Church gives birth in her womb (i.e. the font) through the agency of the breath of God (i.e. the Holy Spirit).

Benedictio fontis

Domine . . . qui . . . laetificas civitatem tuam, fontemque baptismatis aperis . . . (85.12)

O Lord . . . who . . . makest glad thy city and openest the font of baptism . . .

. . . de Spiritu sancto, qui hanc aquam regenerandis hominibus praeparatam arcana sui luminis admixtione fecundet . . . (85.15)

. . . from the Holy Spirit, who by a secret mixture of his light, may render fruitful this water for the regeneration of men.

. . . et totam huius aquae substantiam regenerandi fecundet effectu. (86.12)

. . . and made the whole substance of this water fruitful for regeneration.

Hic omnium peccatorum maculae deleantur. (86.13)

Here may the stains of all sins be washed out. *Deus qui nocentis mundi crimina per aquas abluens . . .* (85.7)

O God who by water dost wash away the crimes of a guilty world . . .

Hic natura . . . cunctis vetustatis squaloribus emundetur, ut omnis homo . . . nova infantia, renascatur. (86.15)

Here may human nature . . . be cleansed from the filth of the old man that all . . . may be born again new children.

. . . et quos aut sexus in corpore aut aetas discernit in tempore omnes in una pariat gratia mater infantia. (85.19)

. . . and that all, however distinguished by age in time, or by sex in body, may be brought forth to the same infancy by grace, their mother.

. . . respice, Domine, in faciem ecclesiae tuae et multiplica in ea generationes tuas . . . (85.10)

Look down, O Lord, on thy Church, and multiply in her thy generations.

. . . ut, sanctificatione concepta, ab immaculato divini fontis utero in novam renata creaturam progenies caelestis emergat . . . (85.17)

. . . to the end that those who are sanctified in the immaculate womb of this divine font, and born again new creatures, may come forth as heavenly offspring . . .

*Inscriptions, paraphrased**Benedictio fontis*

- . . . *tu benignus aspira. Tu has simplices aquas tuo ore benedicito* . . . (86.7)
 . . . graciously breathe upon us. Do thou with thy mouth bless these pure waters.
- (e) To be pure, one must cleanse oneself in this bath, whether the sin be original, or his own. . . . *ut omnes hoc lavacro salutifero diluendi, operante in eis Spiritu sancto, perfectae purificationis indulgentiam consequantur.* (85.27)
 . . . that all those who are to be washed in this saving bath may obtain, by operation of the Holy Spirit, the grace of a perfect cleansing. [Cf. above, (b), second verse, 86.15.]
- (f) The font is the fountain of life which purges the world. *Sit fons vivus, aqua regenerans, unda purificans* . . . (85.26) [Cf. also (b), first verse, 85.7.]
 May it become a living fountain, a regenerating water, a purifying stream . . .
 The font takes its course from the wound of Christ. . . . *qui te una cum sanguine de latere suo produxit* . . . (86.1)
 . . . who made thee flow out of his side, together with his blood . . .
- (g) One must be reborn from the baptismal font to be accepted in the Kingdom of Heaven. . . . *et ad creandos novos populos quos tibi fons baptismatis parturit, spiritum adoptionis emitte* . . . (84.18) [Cf. (d), 85.17, above, for a particularly apt parallel.]
 . . . send forth the spirit of adoption to create new people whom the font of baptism bringeth forth.
 One must be born anew to be accepted into a holy life. . . . *respice propitius ad devotionem populi renascentis* . . . (84.5)
 . . . look mercifully on the devotion of thy people who are born anew. [Cf. also (d) 85.17.]
- (h) [Contains nothing not found in earlier verses above.]

We now have a set of three extraordinarily closely related documents: the verses of the Lateran font, attributable to Leo; the sermons and letters of Leo; and the *benedictio fontis* in the Roman sacramentaries. The first two can be approximately dated: the verses before A.D. 440, and the sermons and letters over a period of Leo's career as preacher. The most pertinent material in his writings, it is to be noticed, is in his sermons, and these were most probably delivered during the first decade of his pontificate,

440–450.⁷⁴ There is no documentary evidence that Leo actually composed a service book, despite tradition, but other parts of the “Gelasian” sacramentary, dealing with the preparation of the catechumens for baptism, have been attributed to him on the basis of a comparison to his authentic writings. For example, a very strong case has been made for Leo as the ultimate source of the *expositio symboli*, more especially the homily explaining the *credo* to the elect as part of the scrutinies before baptism.⁷⁵ This much can be said of the *benedictio fontis*: a hypothetical Leonine sacramentary would most certainly have contained a benediction along the lines of the statements in the inscribed verses and the sermons, and thus very much like the one in the “Gelasian” sacramentary. That is not to say that Leo would have departed radically from the doctrine contained in a previously existing Roman benediction,⁷⁶ but it is quite possible that the inscriptions were carved enduringly upon the epistyle as part of an effort to stabilize and perpetuate a recently prepared, official, doctrine of baptism for the Roman Church. Since it is highly improbable that the verses would have preceded an official liturgical document, prepared with the sanction of the bishop of Rome, the strong possibility exists that the *benedictio fontis*, as preserved in the “Gelasian” sacramentary, goes back at least to the time of Leo and may very well have been prepared by him during the pontificate of Sixtus III.

Returning now to the illuminations of the Fountain of Life in the Carolingian manuscripts, it can be shown that the particular uses there made of it, in its various contexts, disclose meanings that are quite in accord with some of the important aspects of the doctrine of baptism current at the Lateran in the early fifth century. The demonstration of this agreement will more firmly establish the pictures as representations of baptismal fonts, thus fulfilling the second requirement in justification of the title

⁷⁴ O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur* (Freiburg im Br., 1924), IV, 621; Pschmidt, *Leo d. Gr. als Prediger* (Elberfeld, 1912), p. 49 ff.

⁷⁵ Fr. Pierre de Puniet, “Les trois homélies catéchétiques du Sacramentaire Gélisien,” *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, V (1904), 770–784.

⁷⁶ A benediction of the font was customary from very early antiquity, and not alone in the West. Cf. J. W. Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week* (Alcuin Club Collections, no. 29), pp. 162 ff., where evidence is presented for some sort of prayer over baptismal water in the third century from references of Cyprian, Hippolytus, and Tertullian. For the fourth century there are the testimonies of Saint Basil (*Liber de Spiritu sancto*, XXVII, MPG 32, 188B), of Gregory of Nyssa, who speaks of “prayer and the invocation of Divine power over the water” (*Oratio catechetica magna*, XXXIII, MPG 45, 84B), and of Saint Ambrose (*De sacramentis*, I, 18, 19, MPL 16, 441), who speaks of a consecration of the water of baptism in terms which indicate that the general form of the rite was similar to that of the *Liber Sacramentorum*, but we cannot judge the particular nature of the doctrines enunciated in his prayers. See also Theodore of Mopsuestia, *op. cit.*, 54–56, for evidence of a *benedictio* expressive of some ideas similar to those of Leo.

"Fountain of Life" (see above, p. 53), and will reveal some of the reasons for the inclusion of the picture in those manuscripts.

One fact that has always proved troublesome to those who have studied the illuminations of the Godescalc Lectionary is the presence of the superscription on the page containing the Fountain of Life. It has either been dismissed as having no relation to the picture, or its scriptural reference has been misconstrued. There is, on the contrary, the closest relation between the two, and as a result the *fons vitae* takes on a new and rather surprising application.

What appears to be a title in three lines across the head of the page (Fig. 25), reads as follows:

IN VIGILIA NATALIS
D[omi]ni Hora[e] Nonae;
Statio ad S[an]c[t]am Maria[m].

Below, at either side of the canopy, on a line with the capitals:

Sec[undum] Mat[theum] Cap[itu]l[o] III

The formula is that of the normal *incipit* for the pericope of the Vigil of the Nativity in a Carolingian Gospel Lectionary, and refers to the Gospel lection for that day which begins with the third Eusebian section of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew and extends through part of the fourth — that is, Matt. 1:18–21.⁷⁷ This is borne out on the page following, and facing, the illumination, fol. 4^r (Fig. 30), where the opening verse of the reading is given: *In illo tempore. Cum esset desponsata mater eius Maria Ioseph, ante quam convenirent inventa est in utero habens de Spiritu sancto. Ioseph autem vir eius cum esset iustus . . .*⁷⁸ For convenience I quote this brief passage here: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son,

⁷⁷ C. R. Morey, "The Gospel-Book of Landevenec: The Comes," *Art Studies*, 8, pt. 2 (1931), 263.

⁷⁸ The lection continues, through Matt. 1:21, in the first column of the verso in letters of gold, and is followed, near the bottom of the column, by four lines in silver so tarnished as to be illegible but which must have provided the *incipit* of the next lection — *In natali Domini, ad sanctam Mariam maiorem, secundum Lucam capitulo III* — for the text that follows is Luke's version of the Nativity, again in letters of gold.

and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for *he shall save his people from their sins.*" ⁷⁹

At first glance it might be assumed that the superscription, which is the *incipit* for the lection on the page facing it, has been slipped over from its proper place, thereby making of the *fons vitae* a merely decorative initial page for the text of the book. But is this indeed the case? Is it possible, on the contrary, that the page — title and picture — is really a suitable initial page, and that the *fons vitae* is used as an appropriate illustration for the opening pericope of the lectionary, the title placed over it with the very purpose of emphasizing the unity of the *fons vitae* and the first Gospel lection? If that is the case, the *fons vitae* or baptismal font must somehow be equated with the life-giving womb of the Virgin from which issued Jesus, so named because he was to "save his people from their sins." ⁸⁰ But how can the baptismal font (*fons vitae*, as the Lateran inscription would have it) be regarded as appropriate to Christ's conception through the agency of the Holy Spirit?

The answer is again to be found in the writings of Leo the Great in which precisely this analogy is made. In his sermon *In Nativitate Domini IV*, Saint Leo says: "And for every man coming to a rebirth, *the water of baptism is an image of the virginal womb whereby the same Holy Spirit who also impregnated the Virgin [likewise] impregnates the font*; just as the sacred conception casts out sin in that place, so here mystic ablution takes it away." ⁸¹ Again, in the same sermon: "The same kind of origin which He took on in the womb of the Virgin, He has placed in the fountain of baptism. He gave the water what He gave the Mother; the power indeed of the Most High and the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit which brought it about that Mary should give birth to the Savior, in the same way brings it about that the water regenerates the believer." ⁸²

It is hardly necessary further to press the point that the *fons vitae* of Godescalc is there employed in a manner wholly appropriate to the opening pericope of a Gospel lectionary: as a likening of the womb of the Virgin to the baptismal font; rebirth in baptism to the birth of the Savior, both achieved through the power of the "Most High and the overshadowing of

⁷⁹ The modern Roman Missal gives precisely this passage as its Gospel lection for the service at the Vigil of the Nativity, and the station, as in Godescalc, is Saint Mary Major.

⁸⁰ Cf. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v., Ἰησοῦς.

⁸¹ Saint Leo, *Sermo XXIV*, MPL 54, 206A: ". . . et omni homini renascenti aqua baptismatis instar est uteri virginalis, eodem Spiritu sancto replente fontem, qui replevit et virginem; ut peccatum quod ibi vacuavit sacra conceptio, hic mystica tollat ablutio."

⁸² *Ibid.*, 211C: "Originem quam sumpsit in utero virginis, posuit in fonte baptismatis: dedit aquae, quod dedit matri; virtus enim Altissimi et obumbratio Spiritus sancti, [Luke 1:35] quae fecit ut Maria pareret Salvatorem, eadem facit ut regeneret unda credentem."

the Holy Spirit"; the "mystic ablution" to the "sacred conception." As Leo also says: *Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani*.⁸³

But there is additional evidence that the picture of the *fons vitae* in the Godescalc Lectionary has more than passing implications of baptism, and in reality has such close connections with the Lateran at Rome as to explain its appearance in the codex. We are fortunate in possessing considerable information regarding the circumstances of the composition of the Godescalc Lectionary. It is written in letters of gold and silver upon purple vellum, a fact which alone suggests royal patronage.⁸⁴ This is verified by the dedicatory poem, written by the scribe Godescalc, which terminates the book (fols. 126^v and 127^r).⁸⁵ It is there stated that the manuscript was commissioned by Charlemagne and his wife Hildegard, "As, happy, he opened the year in his twice-seventh term of office [*fasces*]," that is, October 9, 781, the date marking the beginning of the fourteenth year of his Frankish reign, which began on October 9, 768, at Noyon.⁸⁶ The verses of the poem giving this information are:

Septenis cum aperit felix bis fascibus annum,
Hoc opus eximium Franchorum scribere Carlus
Rex pius, egregia Hildgarda cum coniuge, iussit.

But this date of commissioning, on or about October 9, 781,⁸⁷ seems to be contradicted by what follows:

This [opus] the humblest servant, Godescalc, was diligent to complete
In the spring time, when the Consul himself [i.e. Charlemagne],
having crossed the Alps,
Wished to visit the city of Romulus,
That the king might behold Peter⁸⁸ and the seat of Peter,
And offer a great many gifts to the lofty enthroned Christ.
He granted many gifts to the unhappy beggars
While he was celebrating there the annual solemnities of Easter.⁸⁹

⁸³ *Sermo XXVI, ibid.*, 213B.

⁸⁴ Samuel Berger, *Hist. de la Vulgate*, p. 259 ff.

⁸⁵ Cabrol and Leclercq, *op. cit.*, III, part I, 709. The text of the poem is given by Dümmler in MGH, *Poetae latini aevi carolini*, I, 94, 95.

⁸⁶ 7. *Idus Octob. in Novioimo civitate* . . . Cf. *Annales Laurissenses*, MGH, *Scriptores*, I, 146. In fact practically all the *annales* agree to this date.

⁸⁷ For a sound analysis of the dates in the colophon, see F. Piper, *Karls des Grossen Kalendarium und Ostertafel* (Berlin, 1858), pp. 11–15.

⁸⁸ I.e. to visit Peter's tomb as he did on his visit to Rome in 774. Cf. Duchesne, *Lib. Pontif.*, I, 497, line 22.

⁸⁹

Ultimus hoc famulus studuit complere Godescalc
Tempore vernali, transcensis Alpibus ipse
Urbem Romuleam voluit quo visere consul,
Ut Petrum sedemque Petri rex cerneret, atque
Plurima celsithrono deferret munera Christo.
Multa peraeigrinis concessit dona misellis,
Annua tunc ibidem celebrans solemnia paschae.

Judging from this part of the colophon alone, one might think that Godescalc endeavored to complete the manuscript during the spring of 781, or at any rate, that he was hard at work upon it in the early part of that year. But this cannot have been the case for two reasons: first, the date of commissioning, he has said, was about October, 781; second, the dedicatory verses contain, as we shall see, a brief account of what took place at Easter time in 781 and must have been written sometime after the events described, but before the death of Hildegard in 783.⁹⁰ The apparent contradiction in dates can, I believe, be resolved only by assuming that the Lectionary was commissioned as a double commemoration: the opening of Charlemagne's fourteenth year as Frankish king; and, perhaps even more important, what had occurred during Charlemagne's trip to Rome six months before.

The important events that occurred in Rome in April of 781 are known from various sources and not least from the colophon itself.

At that time, Hadrian, serving as leader in the land,
 Ruled the apostolic summit in the city of Rome,
 And he [Hadrian], the co-father, raised Carlomannus out of the *waters*
That had been blessed, Carlomannus, the offspring of King Carolus of noble birth,
Born again in the fount and laved in sacred baptism,
 He [Hadrian] raised him up, clothed in white, and gave him the new name Pippin.

Then, by way of recording the date of this important occurrence, the poet concludes:

When the seven-hundredth year had been completed,
 And when the sun had run through eight decades
 From the time that Christ had blessed the ages with his birth
 And extricated the whole world from noisome darkness.⁹¹

Thus 780 years "had been completed" (or gone by) since Christ's birth, and the date of the baptism of Pippin becomes Holy Saturday, April 14, 781.⁹² This is verified, so far as the year is concerned, by another note in the

⁹⁰ Annales Laurissenses, *loc. cit.*, 164.

⁹¹ Praesulis officio tum Adrianus functus in arvis
 Culmen apostolicum Romana rexit in urbe.
 Principis hic Caroli claris natalibus ortum
 Carlmannum sobolem, mutato nomine Pippin,
 Fonte renascentem, et sacro baptisate lotum,
 Extulit albatum sacratis compater undis.
 Septies expletus fuerat centissimus annus,
 Octies in decimo sol cumque cucurrerat anno,
 Ex quo Christus Iesus saecula beaverat ortu,
 Exsuerat totum et tetra caligine mundum.

⁹² Easter, in 781, fell on April 15, but, as we have already seen, the rites of baptism had long since ceased to be celebrated on the Sunday. Cf. the *Ordo Romanus*, *loc. cit.*; Duchesne, *Lib. Pontif.*, I, 516, n. 30.

manuscript again commemorating the same event. Folios 124^v–126^r consist of a Paschal table for the years 779–816 (two nineteen-year cycles).⁹³ In the margin opposite the entry for the year 781 is a note reading: *In isto anno fuit dominus rex Carolus ad sanctam Petrum et baptizatus est filius ejus Pippinus a domino apostolico*. Most of the *annales* note this as the event of the year 781.

Pippin was thus baptized by Hadrian, and the event must have taken place in the Lateran Baptistery. We know that these rites were celebrated there because on Charlemagne's previous visit in 774 the Frankish king and his court and the Pope and his retinue went to the Lateran from Saint Peter's in the afternoon of Holy Saturday for the celebration of baptism.⁹⁴ Charlemagne, in these two visits to the baptistery, doubtless saw and read the inscriptions around the font and heard the same doctrine pronounced in the blessing of the font which preceded the actual baptism. We need no further evidence to see the motives that lie behind any instructions he may have given Godescalc for the inclusion of the *fons vitae* in a book commemorating this event.⁹⁵

Whatever political reasons, or reasons of liturgical policy, there may have been for having the infant baptized at Rome rather than elsewhere,⁹⁶ it would have served to make him more acceptable as king of Italy (Pippin was crowned in the same year) if he had a Roman "birth." The Lateran was, moreover, regarded as the site of the great Constantine's baptism by Pope Sylvester,⁹⁷ and it may be that Pippin's baptism was merely one step in putting into effect Hadrian's expressed wish that Charlemagne become the new Constantine, a program that was to play such an important role in the relations between the future Emperor and Hadrian, and later with Leo III.⁹⁸ Hadrian had written to Charlemagne in this vein in 778 in reply to the

⁹³ Cabrol and Leclercq, *op. cit.*, III, pt. 1, 709; Piper, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁹⁴ Duchesne, *op. cit.*, I, 497, line 25 ff.: "In eodem sabbato sancto in basilica Salvatoris iuxta Lateranis pariter ingressi, ibidem ipse excellentissimus rex cum omnibus suis quousque sacrosancti baptismatis sacramentum antedictus ter beatissimus pontifex caelebravit . . ."

⁹⁵ It may even offer the example of one of the steps taken in the liturgical reforms inaugurated by Pippin the Short and carried on by Charlemagne — part of the movement to make the Roman liturgy official throughout Gaul, and to suppress the Gallican rites in which the primary thought, unlike that expressed in Godescalc's poem, was that baptism is a burial and a resurrection. Cf. Duchesne, *Origines du culte chrétien*, p. 103, and for the Gallican *benedictio*, Muratori, *op. cit.*, II, 739–741.

⁹⁶ On the way back to France from the Roman trip in 781, shortly after Pippin's baptism, the royal family stopped off at Milan where an infant daughter was baptized. Cf. *Annales Laurissenses*, *loc. cit.*, p. 160.

⁹⁷ Cf. above, pp. 44 f. and note 8.

⁹⁸ Duchesne, *Lib. Pontif.*, I, Intro., ccxxxix. It was not Hadrian, but Leo III who became the new Sylvester to Charlemagne's new Constantine. These equations were even graphically represented in the famous mosaics installed by Leo III in his triclinium in the Lateran palace. Cf. Ph. Lauer, *op. cit.*, pp. 103 ff.

latter's proposal to come to Rome in that year for the Easter season and there to baptize his son Carlomannus who had been born a few months previously. This plan was not carried out, as we have seen, until three years had elapsed.

The Godescalc Lectionary was designed, in part, to commemorate Pippin's baptism, when he was "born again in the fount," 780 years "from the time that Christ blessed the ages with His birth." It is not strange therefore that there should also be among the miniatures one that recorded the significance of the event, a *fons vitae*, the fount where Pippin was reborn. And it was introduced into the book as a symbol appropriate to the first lection, as we have seen, because the conception of Christ was the *origo populi Christiani*, as was also the font, thereby supplying an overtone of baptism to the very first page of the text.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that the function of this codex as a commemoration of the baptism of the infant son of an aspirant to the successorship of the power of ancient Rome was not quickly forgotten. Something of the same sort must have been in the minds of the citizens of Toulouse when, in 1811, this same Godescalc Lectionary was presented to the Emperor Napoleon on the occasion when his son too was baptized.⁹⁹

The Fountain of Life appears twice in the Soissons Gospels, once as a full-page illumination (Fig. 26) and again in the lunette of one of the arched Canon Tables (Fig. 29). We should now attempt to determine the significance of each and see if in either case there is a continuation of the usage we have found in Godescalc, where, it will be recalled, the fountain of baptism was represented as a type of the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth, and stood as a symbol of the content of Matthew, section III.

The meanings of these illustrations, however, cannot be fathomed without first observing the make-up of this codex of the Gospels and some of the principles of illustration that were employed by the compiler and illuminator of this manuscript — principles that are found also in other examples of the Ada School of illumination.

The Soissons manuscript, curiously enough, begins with the full-page illumination of the Apocalyptic scene of the Adoration of the Lamb by the Four-and-twenty Elders (fol. 1^v) which certainly has no place, as scriptural illustration, in a Gospel book. It faces the beginning of the Prologue, some-

⁹⁹ Piper, *op. cit.*, p. 16; E. A. van Moé, "Quatre livres royaux," in "Les plus beaux manuscrits français à peintures du moyen âge de la Bibliothèque Nationale," special issue of *Arts et Métiers Graphiques*, 1 November 1937 (no. 60), p. 70.

times attributed to Saint Jerome,¹⁰⁰ whose opening words are *Plures fuisse*. Several pages later comes the short letter of Jerome to Damasus, the *Novum opus*, which ends on folio 6^r. Turning the page, we find on folio 6^v (on the left as the book lies open) the Fountain of Life (Fig. 26), and on folio 7^r (the right as the book lies open), the first of the Canon Tables. The ten Canons occupy twelve pages — through folio 12^v. The text of each of the Gospels is preceded by a portrait of its author, and each of these is preceded in turn by its Priscillian Prologue and the *capitula*. Three of the pages containing portraits of the Evangelists (Mark, Luke, and John) and the respective initial-pages of their texts, contain little scenes in the spandrels formed by the enframing of the great arches, as well as occasional scenes within initial letters.

A recent study of these miniatures, by Robert M. Walker, has shown that they stand in more frequent and direct relation to passages in the Prologues than they do to textual material in the nearby Gospel texts.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the illumination of the Adoration of the Lamb is motivated solely by, and accurately illustrates, a passage in the *Plures fuisse* which is based on a conflation of two passages from the Apocalypse: 4:4–8 (from which are derived the Four-and-twenty, but there described as being upon thrones, which is not the case in the picture nor specified in the Prologue; the sea of glass; the four beasts; and the *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus* which they chant) and 5:6–8 (from which come the standing Lamb and the harps and golden bowls of incense carried by the Twenty-four). Walker has shown the relation of all but three of the illuminations in this manuscript to nearby textual matter, as well as the similar relationship in one other illuminated manuscript of the Ada School,¹⁰² while we have noted the same phenomenon in the Godescalc Gospel Lectionary of the same school. The three illuminations not discussed by Walker are the full-page illustration of the *fons vitae* on folio 6^v (Fig. 26) and the scenes that appear in the lunettes of the fifth and sixth Canons (folios 10^v and 11^r; Figs. 27 and 29), one of which is again the Fountain of Life. But even these three illuminations are subject to the same principles of textual illustration.

In the lunettes of the two Canon Table illustrations we find a treatment that differs radically from the ten others that together constitute the set of

¹⁰⁰ Dom John Chapman, *Notes on the Early History of the Vulgate Gospels* (Oxford, 1908), p. 273. For a contrary view, cf. Samuel Berger, "Les préfaces jointes aux livres de la Bible dans les Mss. de la Vulgate," *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres de l'Institut de France*, XI, 2 (1904), 14–15.

¹⁰¹ "Illustrations to the Priscillian Prologues in the Gospel Manuscripts of the Carolingian Ada School," *Art Bull.*, XXX (1948), 3. This article presents a more complete case for the relation between illustrations and prefatory texts in the Soissons Gospels.

¹⁰² I.e., the Lorsch Gospels.

Canon Tables.¹⁰³ The other arches of the set merely contain the beasts proper to each Canon, and a scroll, book, or *tabella ansata* with the inscribed number of the Canon. In the two which here concern us, however, and which balance one another as the book lies open, we find representations that seem to have no proper place in the arches of a set of Canon Tables. On the left-hand page (Fig. 27) we see two angels supporting a circular medallion in which stands the youthful figure of Christ holding an open book in his left hand and a crossed staff, slung over his right shoulder, in his extended right hand.¹⁰⁴ The ground of the medallion is studded with stars, and at Christ's feet are billowing clouds.

In the lunette of the page for the sixth Canon, which also contains the shorter seventh and eighth Canons (Fig. 29), is the Fountain of Life, seen in perspective from above as it is also in the full-page miniature of folio 6^v. To left and right are twice represented the angel of Matthew and the lion of Mark, the beasts appropriate to the sixth Canon beneath. The outermost angel and lion hold the fringes of two great unfurled banners suspended from poles or rods that project from the cornice of the *tegurium fontis* (an adaptation of the scroll that should have had an inscription identifying the Canon as is the case in most of the arches of the Canon Tables of this manuscript).

The contiguous textual material to which these illustrations of the Canon Tables refer should be the content of the first Eusebian sections that appear immediately beneath them. For the Fountain of Life (Fig. 29), the first parallel passages cited in the sixth Canon are Matthew, section VIII (ix), and Mark, section III. These correspond to Matt. 3:4–6 and Mark 1:4–7. Both of these passages refer to the baptism of the people of Jerusalem “and all Judaea, and all the region round about the Jordan” by John the Baptist.¹⁰⁵ There can be no doubt that the Fountain of Life is represented here, as it was in Godescalc, in a context of baptism and that it uses a baptismal font as its vehicle of symbolic meaning.

In the opposite lunette (fol. 10^v) over the fifth Canon (Fig. 27), the

¹⁰³ Cf. A. M. Friend, Jr., *op. cit.*, 625 ff. for a discussion of the reasons for this change which he attributes largely to one of the models of the Gospels of Soissons — Br. Mus., Ms. Harley 2788.

¹⁰⁴ Friend, *op. cit.*, 626, points out that the artist attempted to retain the correct beasts for this Canon by the expedient of giving one of the angels a pair of horns, thus supplying the required angel and bull. The Gospels of Saint Emmeram, which copies Soissons, has this picture above the same Canon but omits the crossed staff. See *Codex Aureus* (G. Leidinger, ed.), I, pl. 20.

¹⁰⁵ I am indebted to Professor André Grabar for permitting me to see the manuscript of his article on the same subject as this paper (see below, n. 268). In it he makes this connection between the *fons vitae* in the sixth Canon of Soissons and the first of the parallel passages listed.

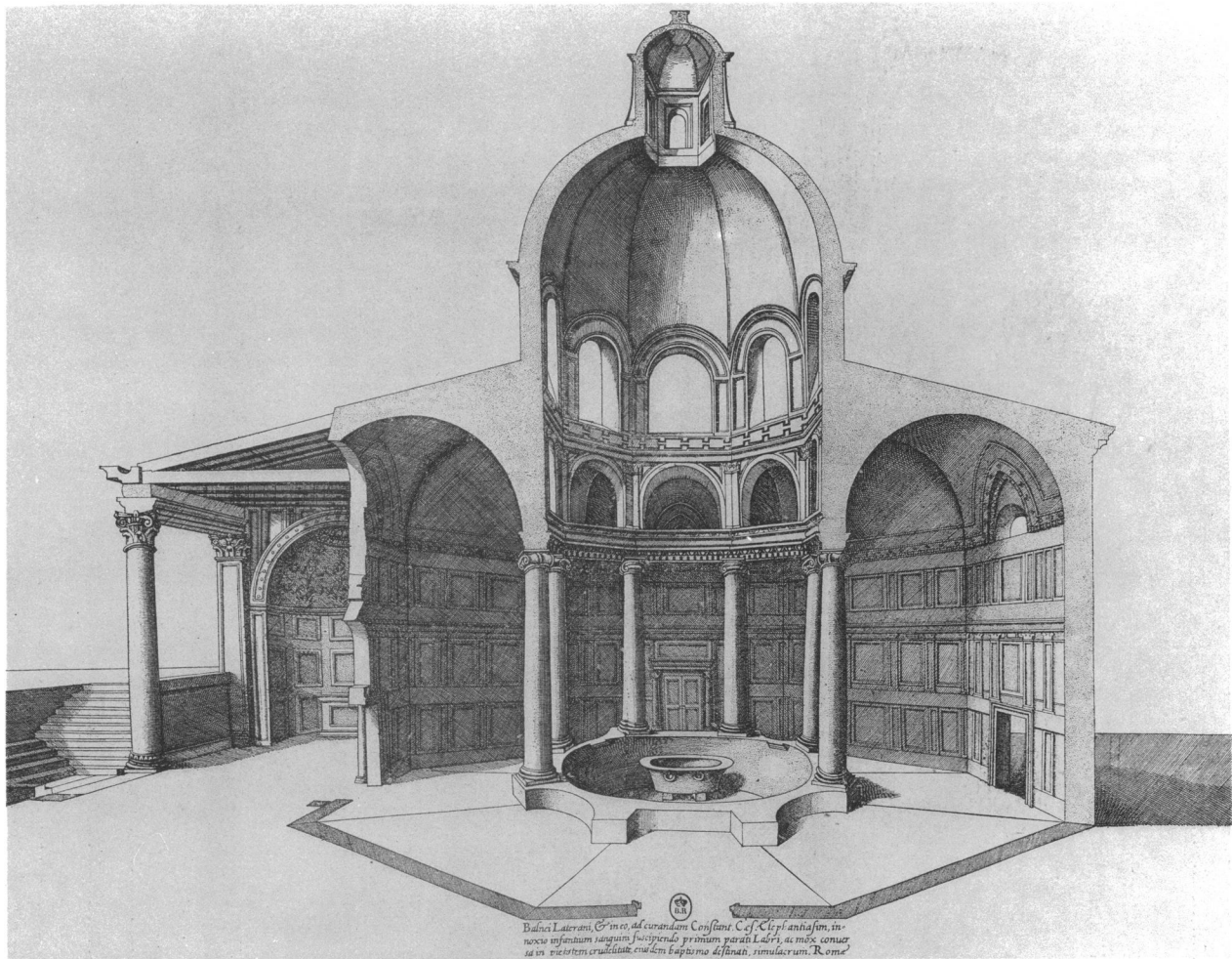
textual references that stand at the head of the Canon listing the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke are Matthew, section III, and Luke, section II. Thus the image of Christ in the lunette has reference to the same scriptural texts that we found inscribed above the Fountain of Life in the Godescalc Lectionary. But it is Matthew's version that serves best to clarify the picture, for it harks back to a quotation from the prophecy of Isaiah (7:14): "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Matthew explains, "which is, being interpreted, God with us." We have, therefore, at the head of this Canon a representation of Christ Immanuel, "God with us."¹⁰⁶

Now it is obvious that these two illustrations, standing alone and facing one another in the middle of the set of Canon Tables, are to be taken together — that only together do they have a significance in their settings. In other words an analogy is set up between the significance of the coming of Immanuel and the significance of the baptismal font. And that analogy is essentially the same as that which we found between the Virgin Birth and the doctrine of rebirth in baptism in the illumination of the Godescalc Lectionary. The significance of that picture is therefore repeated in Soissons, but this time in an even more clear-cut fashion, for both parts of the apposition are illustrated as well as documented in the textual references, whereas in Godescalc one part was illustrated and the other supplied by the text.

Turning now to the full-page example of *fons vitae* in the Soissons Gospels (Fig. 26), let us see what can be learned of its meaning by similar methods. Formally, the picture as it is used here appears to be a frontispiece to the first Canon.¹⁰⁷ To some extent this is true, for there is a very close relationship between the first textual passages of *Canon Primus* and those we found at the beginning of the sixth Canon which called forth the use of the *fons* in its lunette. In the latter, it will be recalled, the passages were Matthew VIII (Matt. 3:4–6) and Mark III (Mark 1:4–7). The first of the parallel passages listed in the first Canon (passages common to all four Gospels) are Matthew VIII (Matt. 3:3); Mark II (Mark 1:3); Luke VII (Luke 3:3–6); John X (John 1:23). Now these verses are really part of the account of John the Baptist's activities in baptizing "unto remission of

¹⁰⁶ Section III of Matthew, strictly speaking, includes only v. 18 of ch. I, and thus does not extend as far as v. 23 where the reference to Immanuel occurs. But, as we have seen, the Godescalc Lectionary quoted Matt. 1:18–21 (actually Sec. III plus part of IV) under the heading of Section III. The headings for the lections merely indicate the starting points for the pericopes, and not their limits.

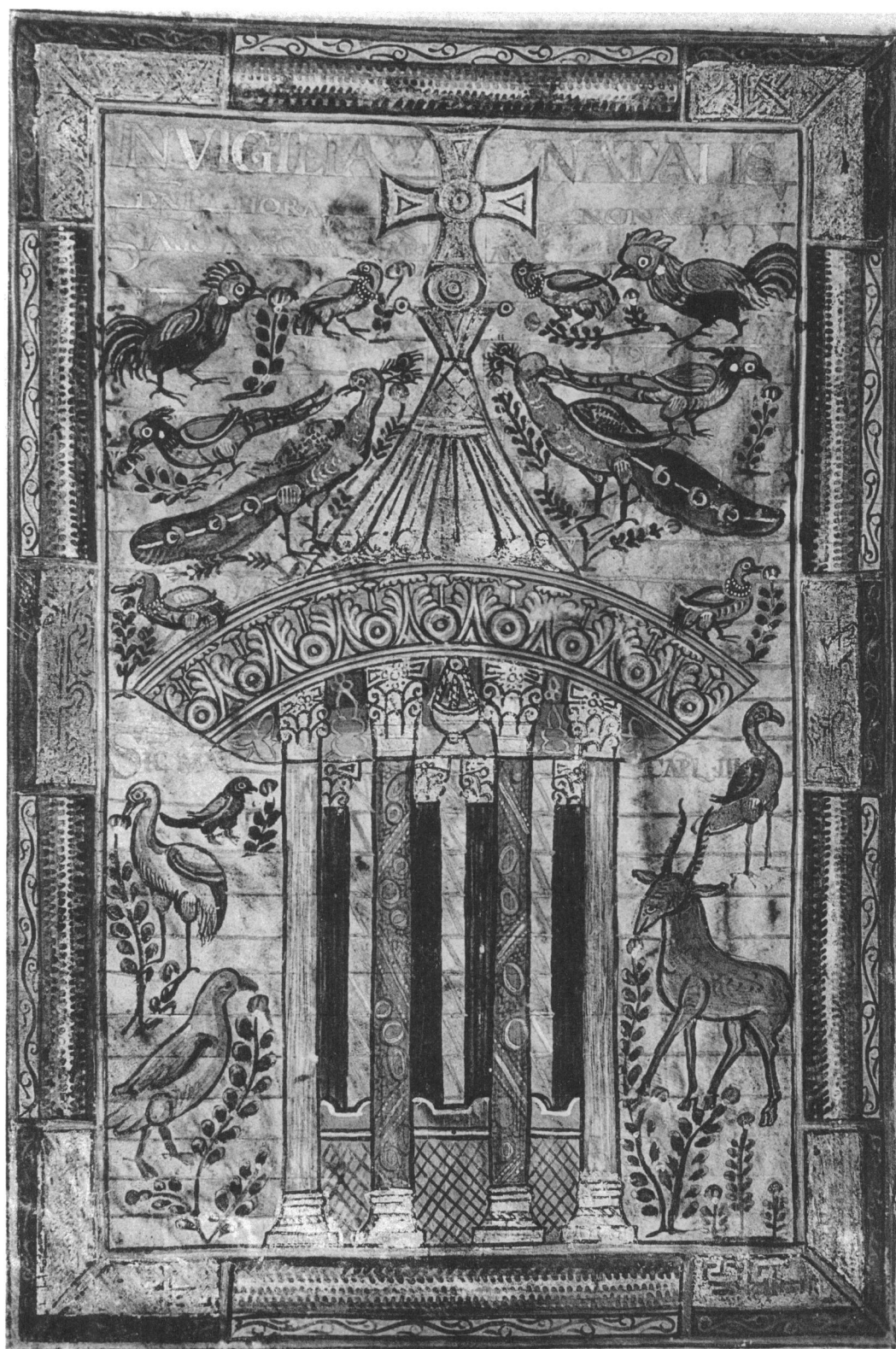
¹⁰⁷ It will be suggested, *infra*, pp. 71, 105–107, that the picture in its original form and significance has the role of frontispiece to the entire set of Canon Tables. At present, however, we are concerned only with an explanation of its use in this particular manuscript.



23. Lateran Baptistery, Rome. Engraving of Antonio Lafreri



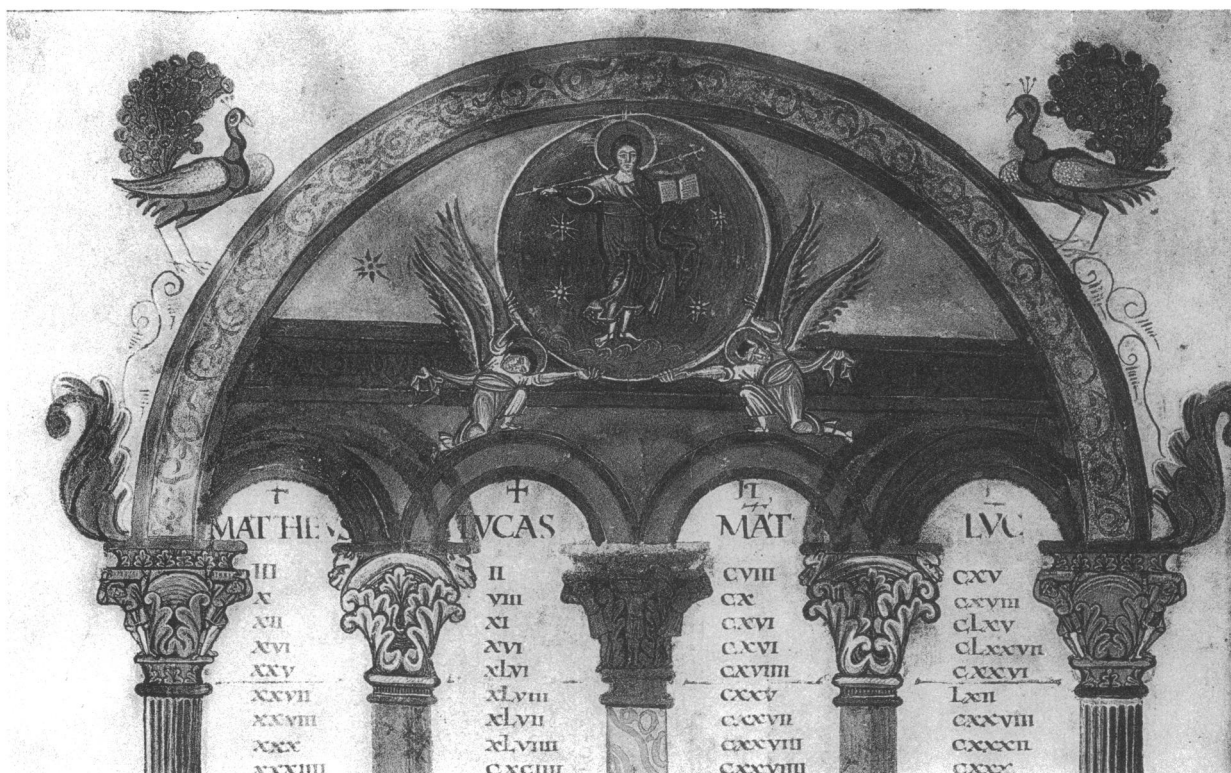
24. Inscribed Epistles, Lateran Baptistery, Rome



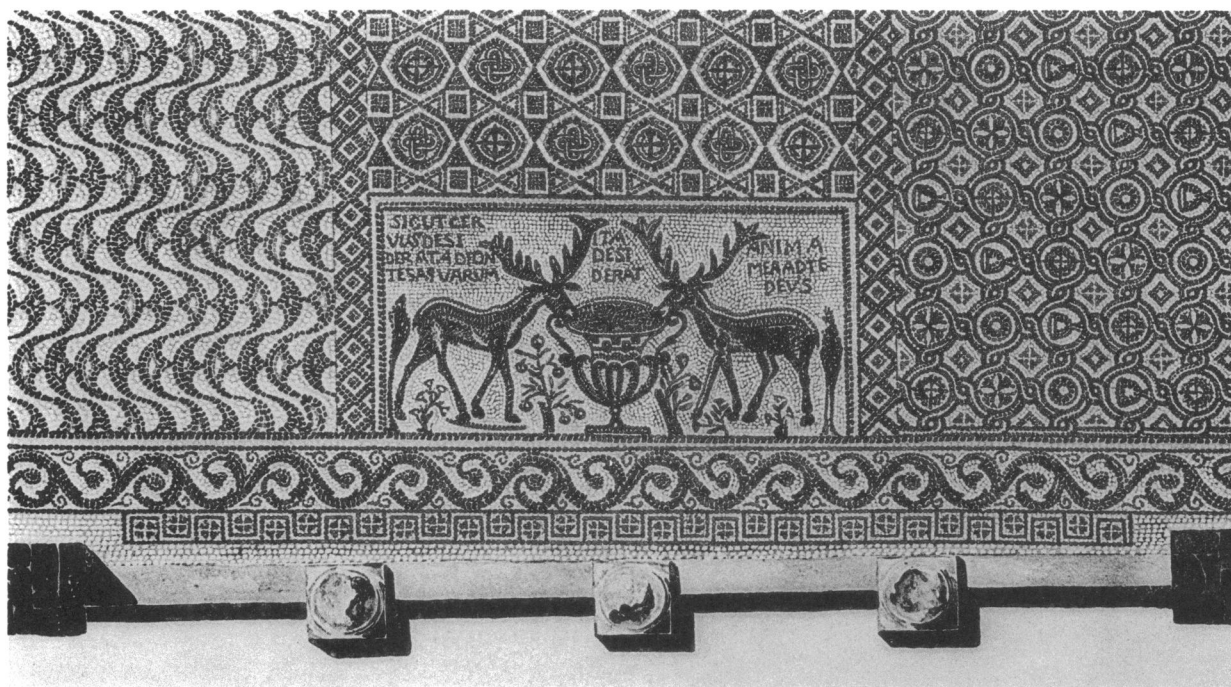
25. Fountain of Life. Godescalc Gospel Lectionary. Paris, Bibl. Nat., nouv. acq. lat. 1203, fol. 3v



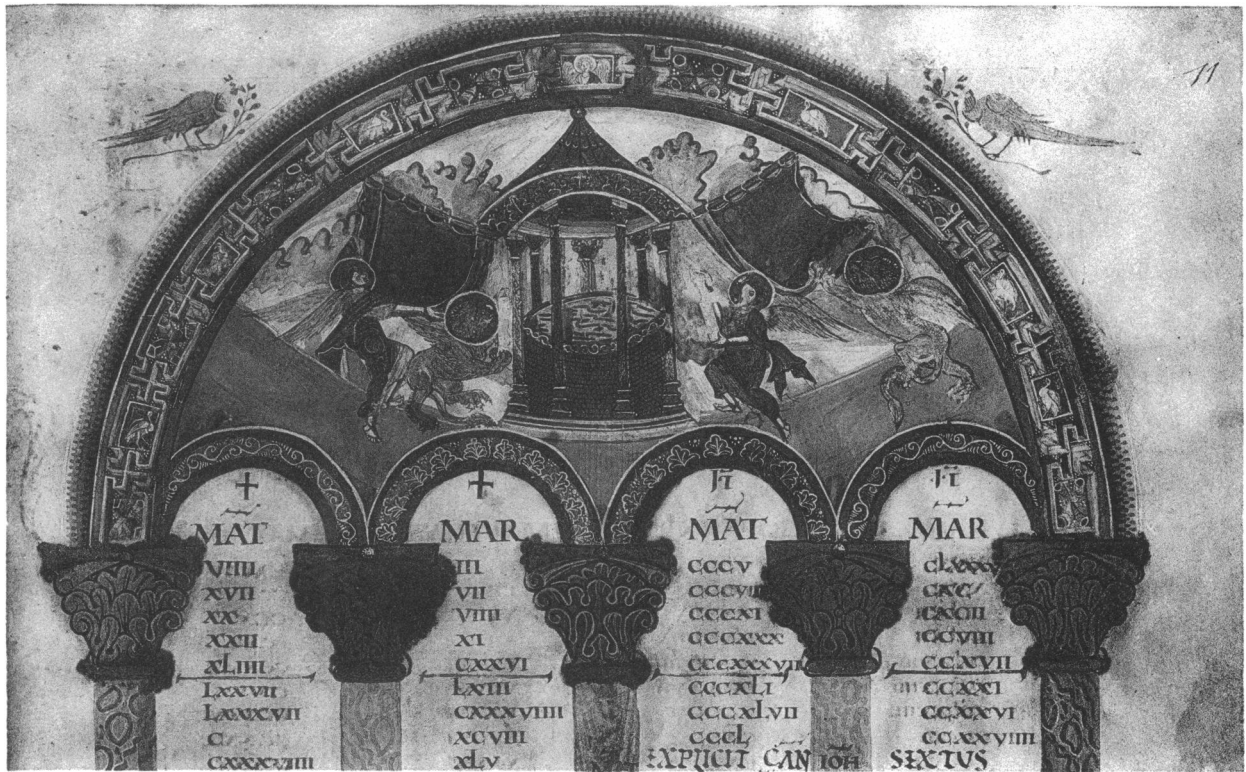
26. Fountain of Life. Gospels of Saint-Médard de Soissons. Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 8850, fol. 6^v



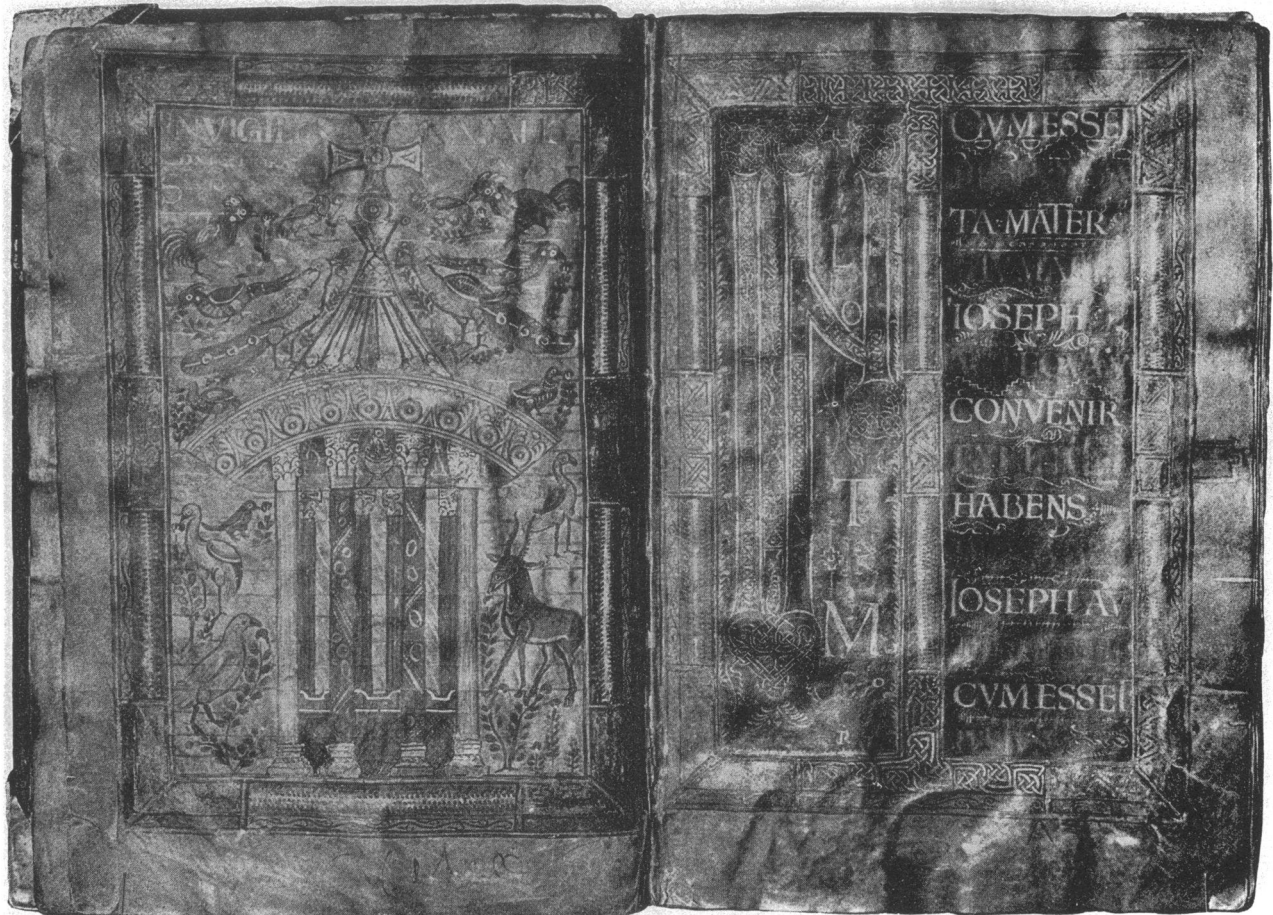
27. Arch of Canon 5. Gospels of Saint-Médard de Soissons. Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 8850, fol. 10v



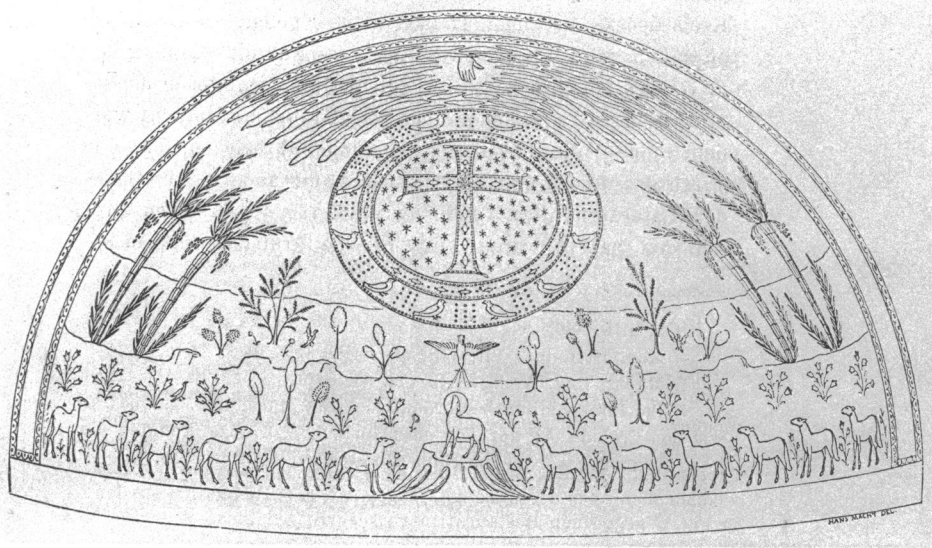
28. Mosaic Pavement. Salona, Baptistery



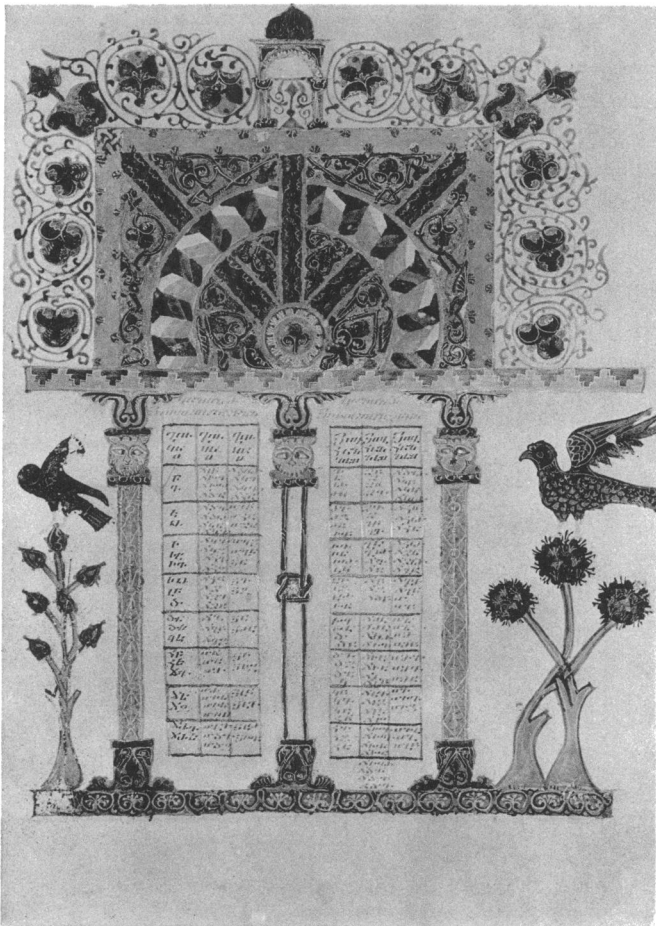
29. Arch of Canons 6, 7, and 8. Gospels of Saint-Médard de Soissons. Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 8850, fol. 11r



30. Godescalc Gospel Lectionary. Paris, Bibl. Nat., nouv. acq. lat. 1203, fols. 3v, 4r



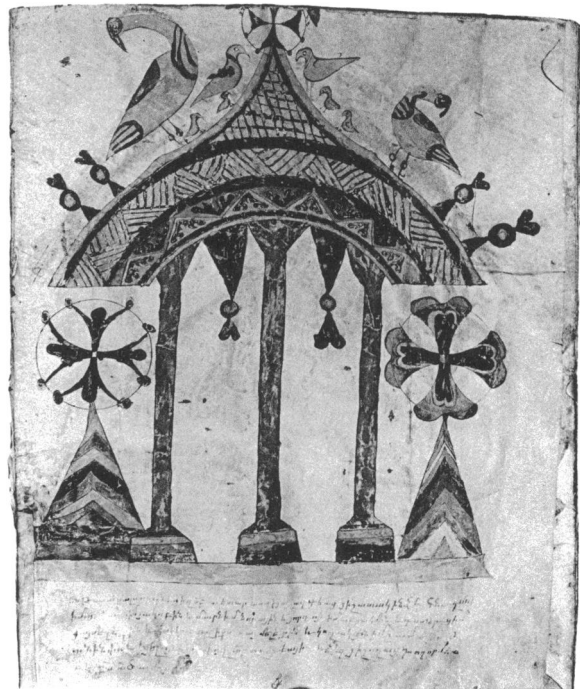
31. Basilica of St. Felix, Nola. Apse Mosaic. Reconstruction of Wickhoff



32. Canon Table. Armenian Gospels, Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, Ms. 538, fol. 11



33. Baptistery, Ostia. Inscribed Architrave



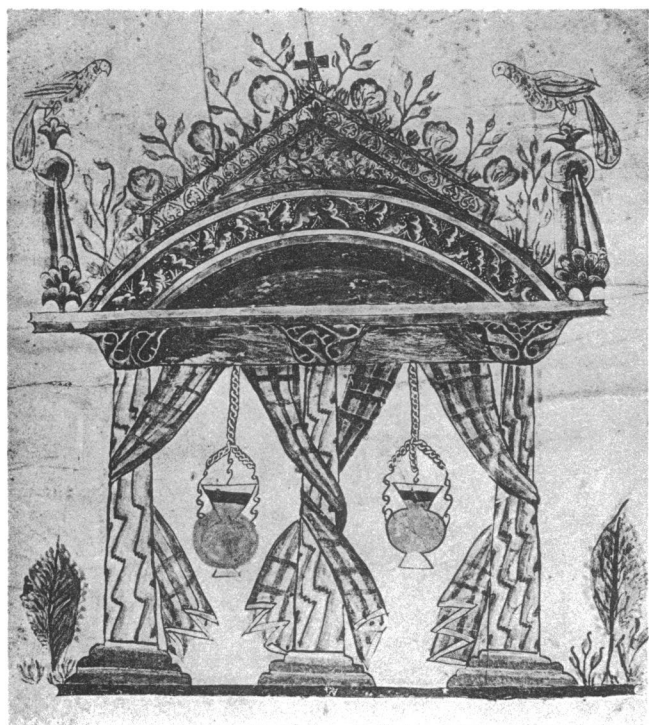
34. Tholos. Jerusalem, Gospels of Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 2562, fol. 3r



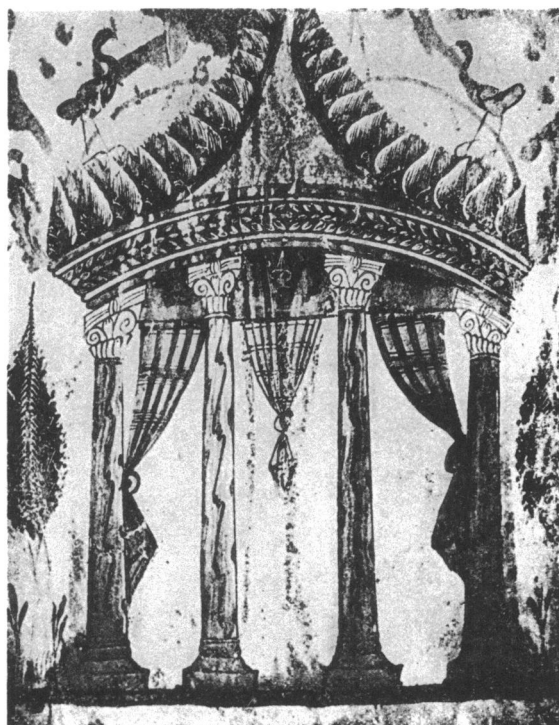
35. Tholos. Etchmiadzin Gospels, fol. 5v



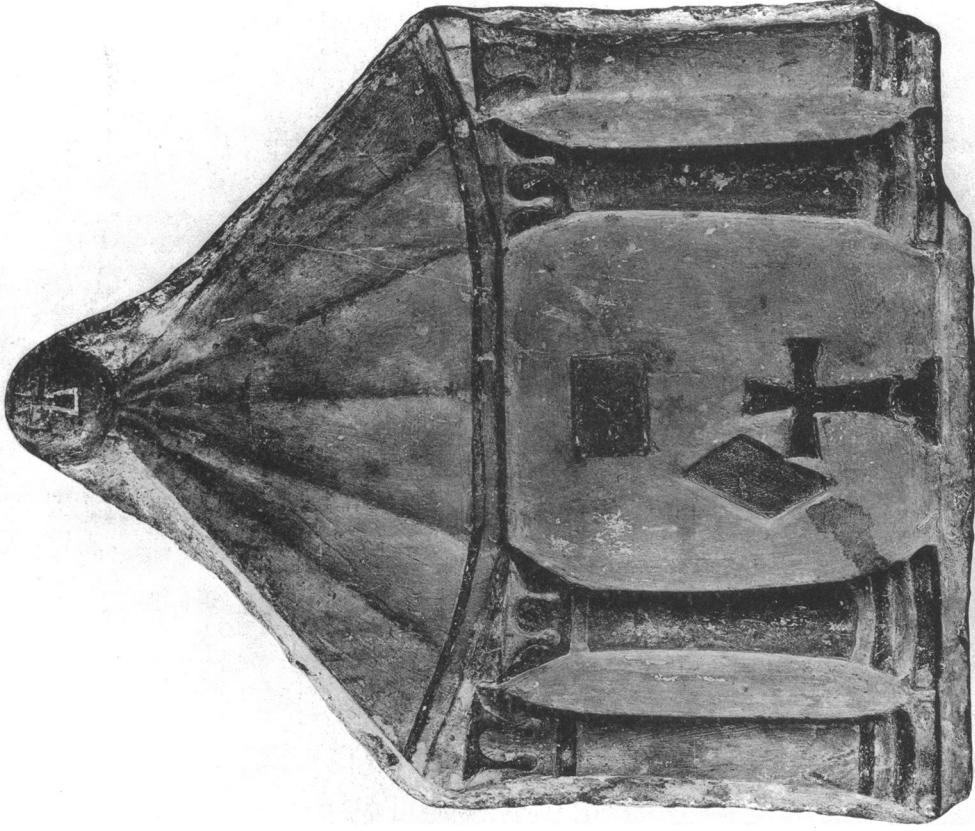
36. Tholos. Jerusalem, Gospels of Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 2555, fol. 7r



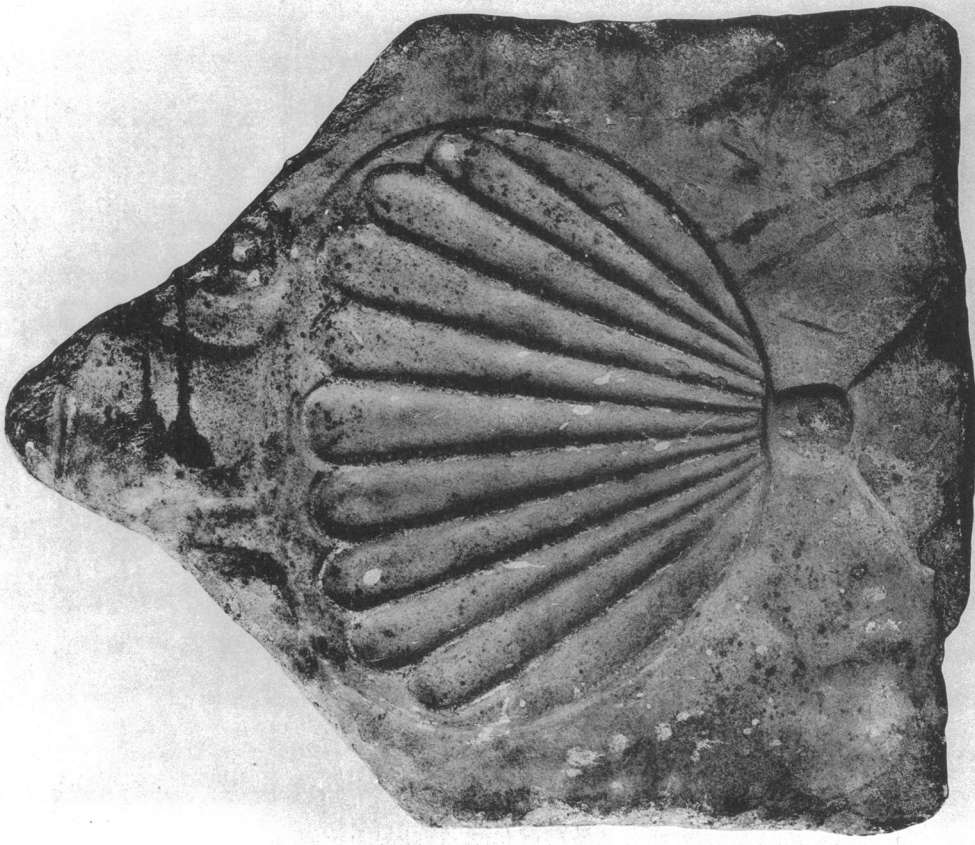
37. Tholos. Vienna, Gospels of Mekhitarist Libr., Ms. 697, fol. 6r



38. Tholos. Page from a Book of the Gospels. Erivan, State Repository of Mss.



39. Stone Relief Plaque. Obverse. Dumbarton Oaks Library and Collection



40. Stone Relief Plaque. Reverse. Dumbarton Oaks Library and Collection



41. Mosaic. Ravenna, S. Apollinare Nuovo



42. Ampulla. Monza, Cathedral Treasury



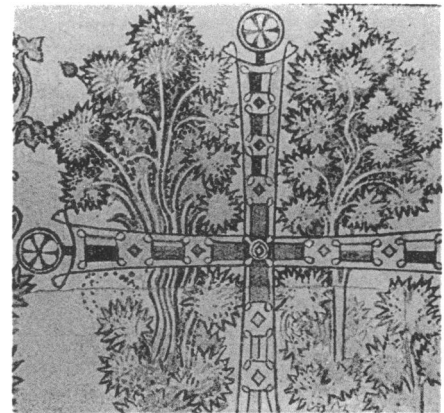
43. Ampulla. Bobbio, S. Colombano



44. Tholos. Georgian Gospels, Adysh, Treasury of Church, fol. 5v



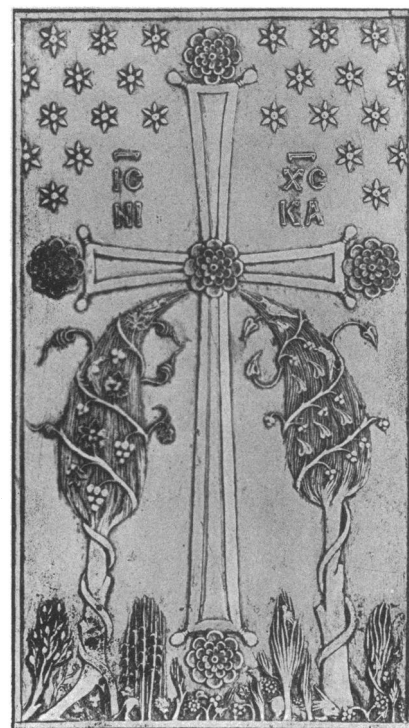
45. Command to Adam. *Barlaam and Ioasaph*. Paris, Bibl. Nat., gr. 1128, fol. 30



46. Cross as Tree of Life. Mosaic, Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem



47. Holy Women at the Sepulcher. Reliquary Box, Vatican, Museo Sacro (detail)



48. Cross as Tree of Life. Harbaville Triptych, Paris, Louvre



49. Ampulla. Bobbio, S. Colombano



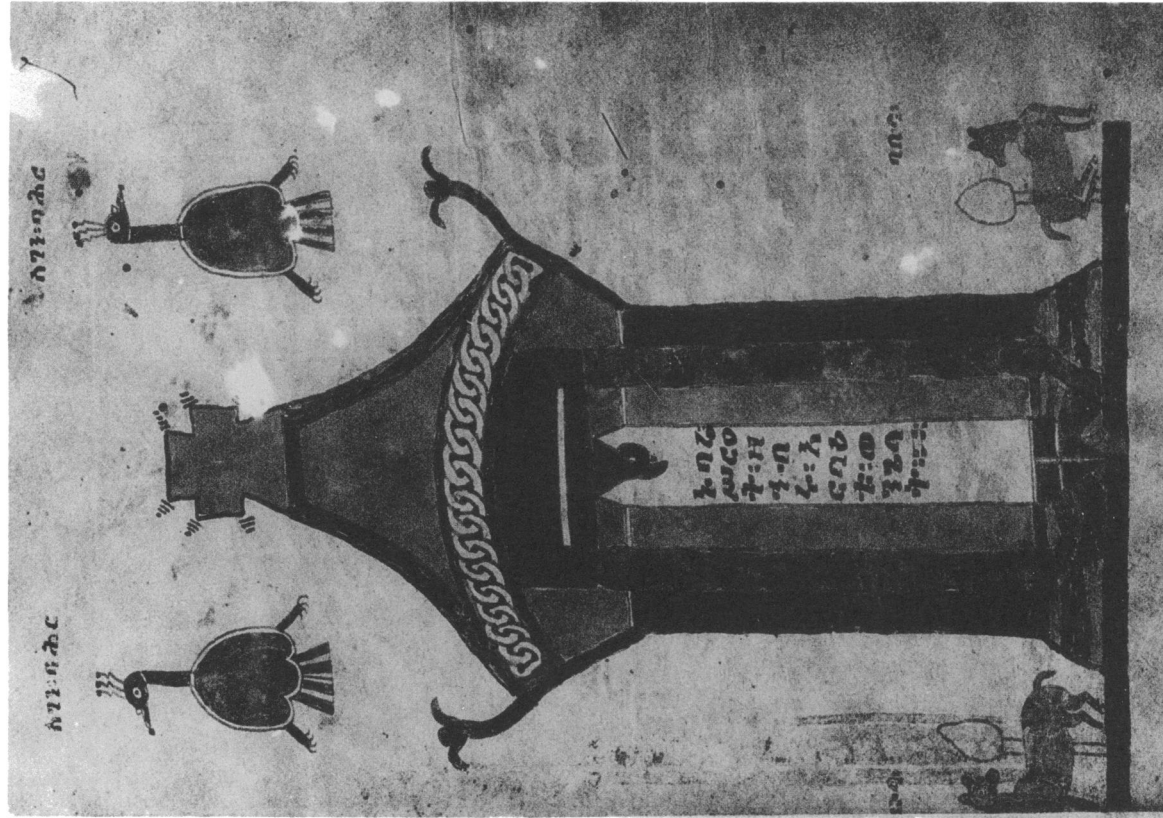
50. Ampulla. Monza, Cathedral Treasury



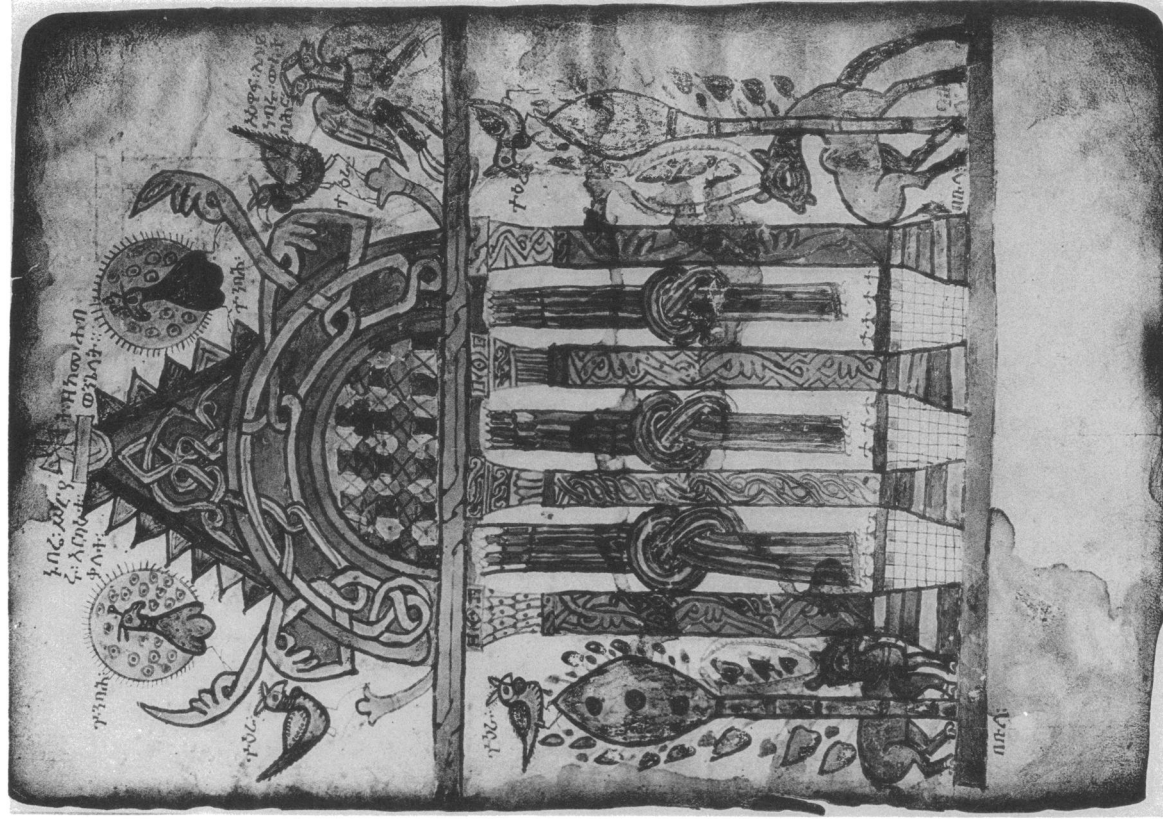
51. Ampulla. Monza, Cathedral Treasury



52. Ampulla. Monza, Cathedral Treasury



53. Fountain of Life. Ethiopian Gospels. Paris, Bibl. Nat., ethiop. 32, fol. 7r



54. Fountain of Life. Ethiopian Gospels. New York, Morgan Library, Ms. 828, fol. 8r



55. Hypothesis. Greek Gospels. Venice, Bibl. Marc., Cod. gr. I, 8, fol. 3r



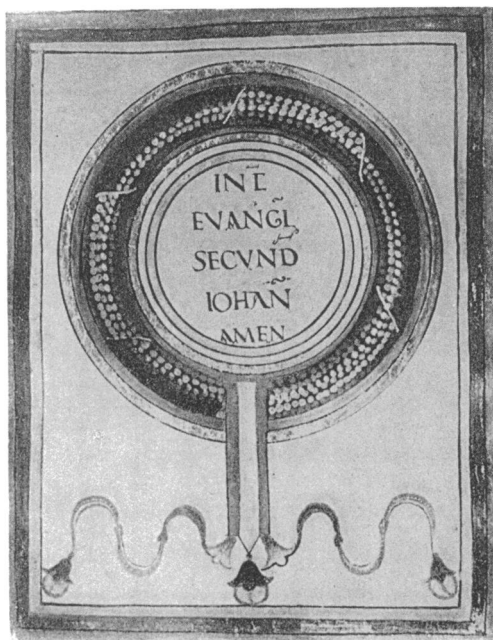
56. Frontispiece. Rabula Gospels. Florence, Bibl. Laurenziana, Plut. I. 56, fol. 2r



57. Hypothesis. Gospels of Rossano. Cathedral Treasury, fol. 5r



58. Frontispiece. Gospels. Vienna, Nationalbibl., Cod. 847, fol. 1



59. *Incipit. Gospels. Gheint, Cathedral, fol. 144v*



60. *Frontispiece. Athos, Lavra, Cod. A. 23, fol. 7v*



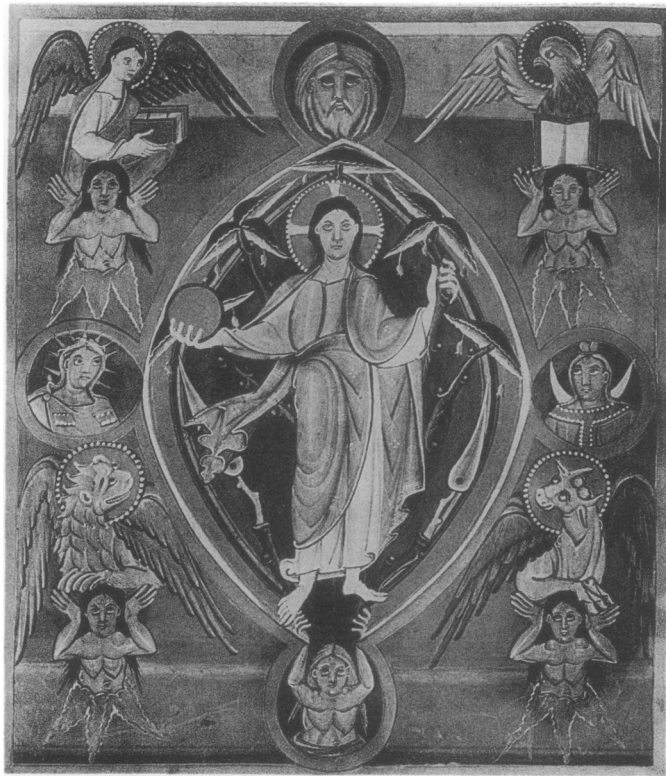
61. *Detail, Fig. 25*



62. *Frontispiece. Gospels. Vatican, Pal. gr. 220, fol. 1r*



63. *Detail, Fig. 26*



64. Bamberg, Cathedral Treasury, Cod. lat. 4454, fol. 20v



65. Lothaire Gospels. Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 266, fol. 2v



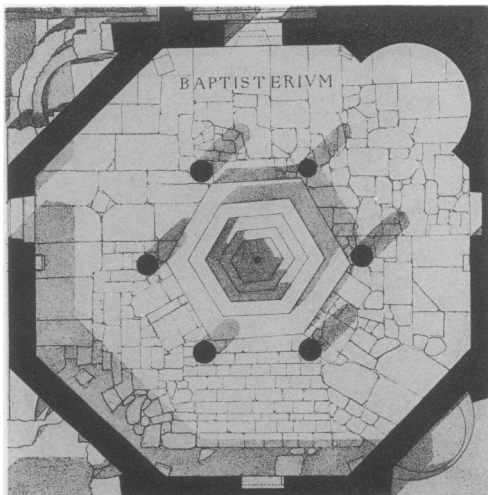
66. Nancy, Cathedral Treasury, Gospels, fol. 2v



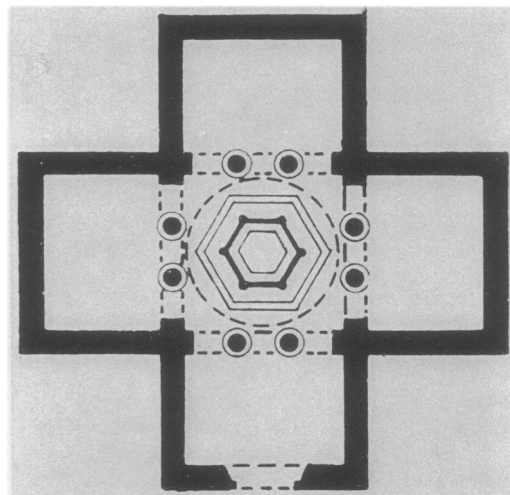
67. Nancy, Cathedral Treasury, Gospels, fol. 1r



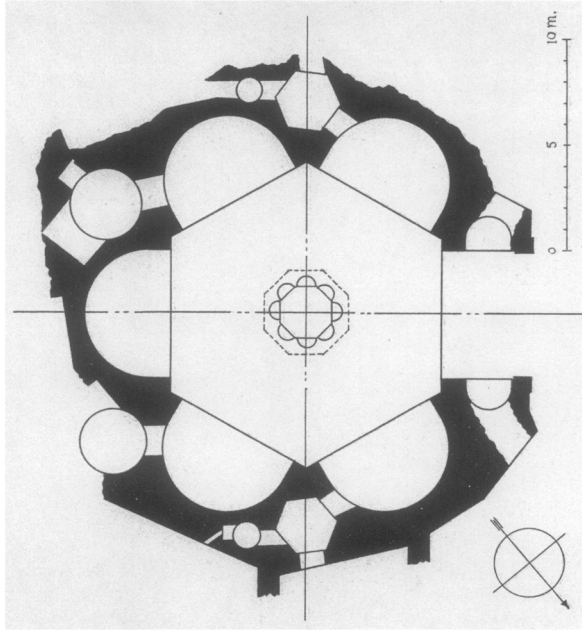
68. The Four Evangelists. Gospels of Aix-la-Chapelle, fol. 14^v



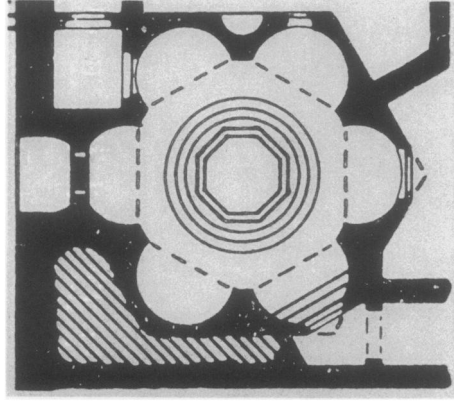
69. Baptistery. Aquileia, South Church II



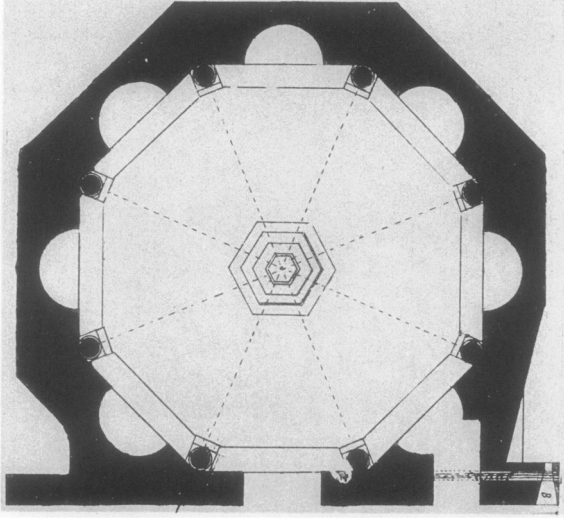
70. Baptistery. Pola, Cathedral



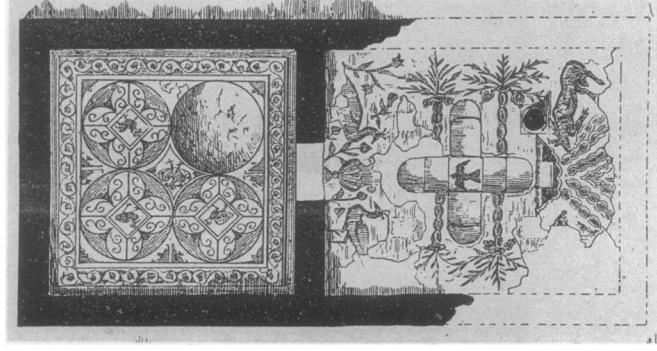
71. *Hagiasma*. Constantinople, Monastery of the Hodegetria



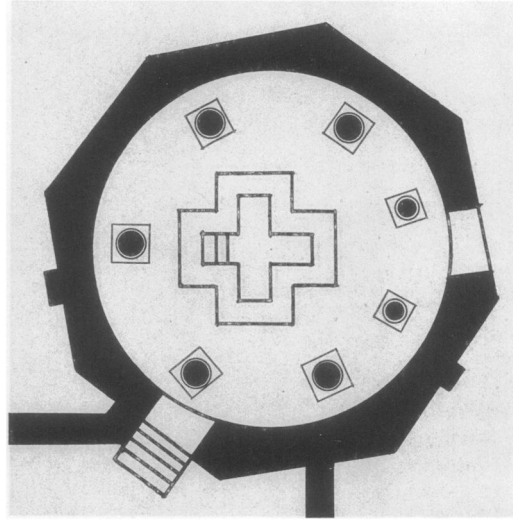
72. Baptistery. Zara, Cathedral



73. Baptistery. Tabarka



75. Baptistery. Oued Ramel



76. Baptistery. Salona, Episcopal Church



74. Font. Announa

sins," and in the Eusebian section of Luke the content corresponds very closely to the passage in Matthew which motivated the use of the font in the arch of the sixth Canon.

But the full-page miniature has a greater significance than that of referring to an account of baptism in the scriptures. The clues offered by the superscription of Godescalc and the references in Canons V and VI of Soissons indicated an apposition between the baptismal font and the womb of the Virgin who was to bear Immanuel. This analogy, we noted, was in agreement with Leo's words quoted from Sermon XXIV.¹⁰⁸ There is, however, a discrepancy if we refer to the verses of the Lateran inscriptions. Distich *d*, it will be recalled, clearly likens the baptismal font, not to the womb of the Virgin, but to that of *genitrix ecclesia*, and with this view, we have also seen, the Roman liturgy of baptism was in agreement. Apparently, therefore, the font can be viewed as symbol of (1) the womb of the Virgin, and (2) the womb of Mother Church. The only source cited thus far that does both is Leo's Sermon LXIV where he says:¹⁰⁹ "It is He [Christ] himself who, born of the Holy Spirit from a virgin [Mother], impregnates his pure Church [by means of] the same breath, so that through baptismal birth countless multitudes of children of God are born . . ." ¹¹⁰

Thus, the fruitfulness of the womb of Mary in bringing forth the Son of God through impregnation by the Holy Spirit has its equivalent in Mater Ecclesia, whose womb (the baptismal font) is likewise impregnated by the same Holy Spirit to continue the process of creating "sons of God." Do the Godescalc *fons vitae* and that in the Canon Tables of Soissons record only the first analogy? And is it possible that the *fons vitae* of folio 6^v of Soissons is used with reference to Ecclesia, if not to Genitrix Ecclesia? Although it is separated from the *Plures fuisse* by the pages of Jerome's letter to Damasus, this picture can nevertheless be shown to have derived its real symbolic content from Jerome's Prologue to the Four Gospels, a content which also explains, in part, why the illumination is not merely appropriate to the first Canon, but should be regarded as frontispiece to the entire set of Canon Tables. This latter point will be made clear in the last part of this paper.

Jerome's Prologue ¹¹¹ was written for the purpose of vindicating the selection of the canonical Four Evangelists, and only those four, as divinely inspired authors of Gospels. The reasons why there can be only four true

¹⁰⁸ Cf. above, p. 63.

¹⁰⁹ MPL 54, 356.

¹¹⁰ Cf. above, p. 56 f. and note 63.

¹¹¹ The text can be found, as a Prologue to Saint Jerome's Commentary to Matthew, in MPL 26, 15-22.

Evangelists (and Gospels) are adduced by resort to an interpretation of certain Old Testament passages in which fours appear with reference to matter that can be construed as symbolic of Ecclesia and the Four Evangelists.¹¹² For example, to quote part of a sentence from the *Plures fuisse*, "Ecclesia . . . has four corners and four rings through which, like the ark of the Covenant, guardian of the law of the Lord, it is borne along by the immovable staves which carry it."¹¹³ Ecclesia is thus like the ark of the Covenant and the four Evangelists are the staves by which it is carried. Now in this very sentence Ecclesia is also described as "spouting forth in the manner of the four rivers of Paradise." But the complete image is stated as follows: "Ecclesia [is] similar to the little hind and the young roebuck of the harts spouting forth in the manner of the four rivers of Paradise."¹¹⁴ An artist who seized upon that much of the text would justly conclude that it was the harts that symbolized the four rivers of Paradise, and would be certain to depict four animals, as the Soissons painter has done. And in the broader context of the Prologue, intent, we must remember, upon limiting the number of Evangelists to four, the harts, symbols of the four rivers of Paradise flowing from Ecclesia, are also symbols of the four Evangelists.¹¹⁵ Further evidence of the connection between this picture and the passage just quoted from the *Plures fuisse* is found in a detail that has never been noted in descriptions of the illumination. A close examination of the miniature itself reveals that a cylindrical spout, invisible in any of the published reproductions, rises out of the center of the *piscina* and from it issue four streams of water which fall into the basin in graceful arcs. These too are symbolic of the four rivers of Paradise and the four Evangelists.

This is in great part the imagery of Paulinus of Nola who, in describing the conch mosaic (Fig. 31)¹¹⁶ in his new basilica of Saint Felix (built *ca.*

¹¹² The motif of the number four culminates in the passage adapted from the Apocalypse (the four beasts as symbols of the Evangelists) which inspired the frontispiece of the book.

¹¹³ Ecclesia . . . quatuor et angulos et annulos habet, per quos quasi arca Testamenti et custos Legis Domini, lignis immobilibus vehitur.

¹¹⁴ Ecclesia . . . similis damulae hinnuloque cervorum quatuor flumina paradisi instar eructans.

¹¹⁵ The Church is also likened in this passage of the Prologue to the *rock* upon which it was founded (*quae supra petram Domini voce fundata est*); to the *bride* "whom the king introduced into his chamber" [*Cant. I, 4*] (*quam introduxit rex in cubiculum suum*) and "to whom, through the opening for the mysterious descent, he sent his hand [*Cant. V, 4*] (*et ad quam per foramen descensionis occultae misit manum suam*). The Church as the rock is common enough (particularly in the literature of the West) as is also the allusion to Ecclesia as bride of Christ. Cf. O. Casel, "Die Taufe als Brautbad der Kirche," *Jahrb. für Liturgiewissenschaft*, V (1925), 144-147, where the subject is reviewed from scriptural, patristic, and liturgical sources.

¹¹⁶ For a reconstruction of the apse mosaics, see F. Wickhoff, *Röm. Quart.*, III (1889), 158 ff. and drawing, p. 169, lower fig.

A.D. 402), says in the titulus which interpreted the scene of the Lamb of God upon the mount from which issued the four rivers of Paradise:

He [Christ] himself, the rock of the Church, stands upon the rock,
From which flow four sonorous springs,
The Evangelists, living streams of Christ.¹¹⁷

The mount upon which the Lamb stands is thus Ecclesia, and from it flow the four rivers of Paradise which are understood to symbolize the Evangelists. A similar meaning is probable in the cases where the Cross, instead of the Lamb, is placed upon the mount with its four streams,¹¹⁸ or in those where both Lamb and Cross are so placed.¹¹⁹

The idea that the rivers flowing from Ecclesia symbolize the Evangelists, and especially the application of all this to baptism, is of very early origin in Patristic thought in the Latin West. Saint Cyprian, for example, in a letter to Jubaianus¹²⁰ says: "Ecclesia, setting forth the likeness of paradise, includes within her walls fruit-bearing trees [which] she waters with four rivers, that is, with the four Gospels wherewith, by a celestial inundation, she bestows the grace of saving baptism. Can anyone water [i.e. baptize] from Ecclesia's fountains who is not within Ecclesia?" This passage alone can serve to explain the inscription (Fig. 33) found carved above the entrance to the baptistery attached to the Christian basilica at Ostia (fourth century?) which reads: "In Christ. Take of the *fontes* of the Christians: Geon, Fison, Tigris, and Euphrata."¹²¹

The full-page illumination of the Fountain of Life is thus not solely a frontispiece to the Canon Tables — it is also dependent upon the Prologue of Jerome even though the text of the *Novum opus* intervenes between the

¹¹⁷ *Ep.* 32, 10, CSEL 29, 286:

Petram superstat ipse petra ecclesiae,
De qua sonori quattuor fontes meant,
Evangelistae viva Christi flumina.

¹¹⁸ As in the Lamb Sarcophagus of S. Apollinare in Classe. Cf. Marion Lawrence, *The Sarcophagi of Ravenna* (College Art Association Study No. 2, 1945), fig. 56.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, fig. 58 (Bebi Sarcophagus, Padua); fig. 61 (Honorius Sarcophagus, Tomb of Galla Placidia, Ravenna).

¹²⁰ *Ep.* 73, 10, CSEL 3, pt. 2 (G. Hartel, ed.), 785: "Ecclesia paradisi instar exprimens arbores frugiferas intra muros suos intus inclusit . . . has arbores rigat quattuor fluminibus id est evangeliiis quattuor, quibus baptismi gratiam salutari et caelesti inundatione largitur. Numquid de ecclesiae fontibus rigare potest qui intus in ecclesia non est?"

¹²¹ In [chrism] *Geon Fison Tigris Euphrata / Cri(st)ianorum sumite fontes*. Cf. G. Calza, "Una basilica di età Costantiniana scoperta ad Ostia," *Atti della Pont. Accad. Rom. di Archeol.*, Ser. III, *Rendiconti*, XVI (1940), fasc. I-II, 63-88; XVIII (1941-42), fasc. III-IV, 135-148.

two.¹²² By associating the *fons vitae* with the Prologue, the exceedingly clever illuminator of the Soissons Gospels has made of it a symbol of Ecclesia who “bestows the grace of saving baptism,” and by including four harts and four jets of water in his picture, thus symbolizing the Evangelists as well as the four rivers of Paradise, he has made of it an appropriate frontispiece to the concordance of the Evangelists typified in the Canon Tables.

The Soissons painter, in contrast to Godescalc, is thus in accord, in his understanding of the font, with the thought expressed in the fifth-century inscriptions at the Lateran, the *benedictio fontis*, and some of the sermons of Leo Magnus wherein the font is the symbol of Ecclesia.

A partial development of this ambiguous symbolism of baptism, whereby the font is at once analogous to Christ’s conception and to Ecclesia, had occurred in the East and the West even before Saint Leo. Clement of Alexandria, for example, had to some extent expressed a typological resemblance between the Virgin and Ecclesia when he said, “One alone is [Christ’s] mother, a virgin. It is pleasing to me to call her ‘Ecclesia’.”¹²³ To Saint Ambrose, Ecclesia was a type comparable to the Virgin Mary. She was a virgin,¹²⁴ but at the same time mother.¹²⁵ It was therefore not difficult for him to make the analogy, as he did in *Expositio in Lucam* in commenting upon Luke’s version of the Incarnation: “It is well said [that Mary was] ‘betrothed’ but a ‘virgin’ [Luke 1:27], because Ecclesia is a type which is immaculate but wedded. The virgin [i.e. Ecclesia] conceived us by the Spirit [i.e. in baptism], the virgin bore us without groans, and for that reason, I suppose, Holy Mary, the bride of one [i.e. Joseph] was impregnated by the other [i.e. the Holy Spirit].”¹²⁶

The typological resemblances expressed by Clement and Ambrose, however, are more general than the precise statements of Leo. But it would be a mistake to think that the exact apposition of the wombs of the Virgin and of Ecclesia to the font of baptism was limited to the early Middle Ages in

¹²² This is the only case in the Soissons Gospels in which the illustration is separated from the text of the Prologue to which it refers. The irregularity of position in this instance will be explained below, p. 106 f.

¹²³ *Paedagogus*, I, VI, MPG 8, 300: μία δὲ μόνη γὰρ μήτηρ παρθένος. Ἐκκλησίαν ἐμοὶ φίλον αὐτὴν καλεῖν.

¹²⁴ *Ep.* LXIII, 37, MPL 16, 1250; *Exhort. Virginitatis*, 67, *idem*, 372.

¹²⁵ *De Virginitate*, I, 31, *ibid.*, 208.

¹²⁶ MPL 15, 1635–36: “Bene desponsata, sed virgo; quia est Ecclesia typus, quae est immaculata, sed nupta. Concepit nos virgo de Spiritu, parit nos virgo sine gemitu. Et ideo fortasse sancta Maria alii nupta, ab alio repleta . . .” The translation of *et ideo fortasse* presents some difficulties. To translate it literally would be to impugn Ambrose’s belief. It is best to take the phrase as signifying his tentative suggestion that Mary was a counterpart to *Ecclesia typus* because the circumstances of the Conception of Christ are in conformity to that type.

the West, or to western thought alone. The following selections in which one or the other, or both, of these analogies are made will serve to indicate that continuity. Others will reveal the identical thought in Armenian literature.¹²⁷

Rupert of Deutz, in the early twelfth century, indicates that the doctrines enunciated by Leo had survived through the centuries when he discusses the power of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Baptism in these terms: "Wherefore with this sacrament [the Holy Spirit] begins to make a covenant that we are the sons of God; and indeed in this, its sacrament, [the Holy Spirit] itself brings it to pass that we are born again and are sons of God. That Spirit indeed who came upon Mary with his divine omnipotence, and 'overshadowed' her [Luke 1:35], so that she should conceive, and so that there should be born from her the only-begotten Son of God, [that same Spirit] also came upon the waters with the same omnipotence, and granted them fecundity so that sons of God should be born again from them. The *fountain* of elemental water, *made living* by the intervention of this Spirit, *is made the womb of the Church*, the womb of grace."¹²⁸ We will later have occasion to refer to additional statements of Rupert who makes what is probably a more complete statement of all the connotations of the Fountain of Life than any other single author.

An Armenian text in which one of the analogies is made is found in the Synaxary of "Ter Israel" which contains a homily for the feast of the "Nativity of the Theotokos, blessed of all and always Virgin Mary, from Joachim and Anna," a feast which falls on September 8 (29 Navasard).¹²⁹ In expounding the reasons for universal joy at the birth of the Virgin, it is said:¹³⁰ "We rejoice . . . in the birth of her who is the mother of all Christians, and birthgiver to the entire fulfillment of the Catholic Church (Eph. 1:23), who is the source of the stainless birth from the font, by water and Spirit, which is comparable to the birth of the Son of God from the Virgin through the Holy Ghost . . . For just as it was impossible for the Virgin to beget a child without the aid of man, and yet the Son of God was born through the Holy Ghost, in like manner the water could not cause men to be born sons of God, yet by the same Spirit by whose means the Virgin was strengthened, was strengthened the womb of the baptismal font, which is an image of the

¹²⁷ F. C. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum* (Oxford, 1905), p. 22 n. (d), and p. 25 has already noted many instances wherein is apparent the Armenian tendency to identify the Virgin Mary and Ecclesia.

¹²⁸ *De Trinitate et operibus ejus. De S. Spiritu*, III, 9, MPL 167, 1648B.

¹²⁹ Edited and translated into French by G. Bayan, *Patrologia Orientalis*, V, fasc. 3 (1910), 522-548.

¹³⁰ Page 534. The translation given here differs from Bayan's and is that generously provided me by Professor Der Nersessian.

Holy Virgin herself, and we were born sons of God.” This sounds very Leonine, and it may well have come into Armenian texts from western sources, for the passage quoted is found in redaction “B” of the synaxary which is considered to be that of the Catholicos Gregory VII (1295–1307), written in Cilicia.¹³¹ Here the Armenians came into close contact, especially in the thirteenth century, with the Latin West through their association with Franciscans and Dominicans. For a time, particularly under the Catholicos Gregory VII, the ties with the Roman Church became relatively strong,¹³² and even before this, under Gregory II (1065–1105), relations with Rome were more successful than with the Greek Church.¹³³

A little later, John of Erznka, perhaps again from Latin monastic sources, reveals his acquaintance with the analogy between Mater Ecclesia and the font. In “The Precepts of [Erznkatzi and] Wardan about Baptism”¹³⁴ the thought is expressed this way: “Now Baptism is the beginning and capital of Christianity, and in the language of the world is called life. What then is baptism? It is birth afresh . . . And of this birth God is father and the Church mother, and the font is the womb which brings forth her child by water and Spirit.”

But there is evidence that similar ideas regarding baptism were current in Armenia at a much earlier date. Codex “A” of the Armenian *Rituale*, ascribed by Conybeare to the ninth or tenth century,¹³⁵ has a rubric for the Consecration of the Font which begins: “Canon of blessing a font, which contains the beginning of baptism for the divine grace of the regenerate. Forasmuch as a Church is not complete, which does not contain the births of its womb . . .”¹³⁶ The modern printed edition of the Armenian Euchologion¹³⁷ adds, by way of explanation: “the order of salvation and divine grace of regeneration, whereby also holy Church is brought to perfection, for the holy Font is regarded as her womb bringing the Christian to birth.”

Although we have shown that the *fons vitae* appearing at the head of the sixth Canon of the set in the Soissons Gospels, folio 11^r (Fig. 29), was

¹³¹ The excerpts from redaction B, published in the *Patrologia Orientalis*, are taken from the edition published in 1834. This publication is largely based on the manuscript of Venice written for King Oshin, but it has been shown that the editors also introduced more recent texts so that until the manuscript itself is published one cannot be certain that the passage actually belongs to the Synaxary of the Catholicos Gregory VII. Cf. N. Adontz, “Note sur les synaxaires arméniens,” *Revue de l’Orient Chrétien*, XXIV (1924), 211, 216–218.

¹³² Tournebize, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l’Arménie* (Paris, 1900), p. 307 ff.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 164 ff.

¹³⁴ Translated by Conybeare, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–108, from a volume of *oskephorik*, or miscellany: Cod. 1108 of San Lazzaro, Venice, dated 1317.

¹³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. ix: San Lazzaro Library, Venice, No. 457.viii.6.

¹³⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹³⁷ Conybeare’s Msh., printed in 1807. *Op. cit.*, p. xxiv.

used there in the same sense as the Fountain in Godescalc, it is nevertheless interesting and perhaps significant that evidence of a tradition for the symbolization of Ecclesia and Immanuel at the heads of Canon pages is to be found in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Armenian books of the Gospels, and recorded in Armenian literature in the twelfth.

Professor Der Nersessian¹³⁸ has translated portions of an Armenian text, an introduction to the Commentary to Matthew's Gospel, written by Saint Nerses the Gracious, Catholicos from 1166 to 1173, in which he explains the symbolism which he implies was used in illuminations at the heads of each of the ten Canon Tables. No set of Canon Tables has been found that conforms exactly to his iconography, although some Armenian manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries indicate that their painters were familiar with Nerses' discourse. This is not surprising, since the passages of his text dealing with the symbolism of the Canon Tables were, in some Gospel manuscripts, transcribed upon the pages preceding the Tables. The interesting point is that Nerses' tenth Canon was said to symbolize Ecclesia, while certain details of the ninth Canon are explained as symbolizing Immanuel.¹³⁹ Folio 11^r of one of these Cilician-Armenian Gospel books (Baltimore, Walters Gallery, Ms. 538, dated 1193, shown in Fig. 32), has a ciborium-like structure placed in the midst of a rinceau ornament above the rectangular frame of the Canon Table. The little structure bears no close resemblance to the *fons vitae*, nor to the so-called "tempietto" or tholos, of earlier Armenian manuscripts, but there can be no doubt that it is used here to symbolize the Church,¹⁴⁰ if we can draw an analogy to the marginal representation of a very similar ciborium on Folio 54^v of the twelfth-century Armenian manuscript, Venice, no. 1635.¹⁴¹ This latter stands opposite the verse Matt. 16:13, but was inspired by Matt. 16:18: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build my Church."¹⁴² A possible indication of an earlier tradition in which a symbol of Ecclesia is used within the framework of the Canon Tables — a tradition not limited to the Carolingian West and Cilician Armenia — is found in the tenth century Georgian Gospels of Bert'ay.¹⁴³ Above the arch enclosing Canons V and VI, and again above that for Canons VII to X, is a circular structure with a highly decorative conical

¹³⁸ *Manuscrits arméniens illustrés des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles de la Bibl. des Pères Mékhitharistes de Venise* (Paris, 1937), Text, pp. 58–60.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁴⁰ As Professor Der Nersessian suggests, *ibid.*, 60.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pl. XXXIII, fig. 65.

¹⁴² In the same manuscript the motif occurs again in the same context, opp. Mark 8:27. *Ibid.*, p. 64 and n. 3.

¹⁴³ R. P. Blake and S. Der Nersessian, "The Gospels of Bert'ay," *Byzantion*, XVI (1942–43), 226–285, and pl. VI, fig. 11.

roof supported upon piers rather than columns, thus more nearly presenting the aspect of a building than a ciborium, but still, perhaps, symbolizing Ecclesia.

There is at least one of the Cilician-Armenian manuscripts that recalls, in its Canon Tables, several other iconographic features we have observed in the Canon Tables of the Soissons Gospels. The manuscript is Venice, no. 1635, in which we have already found the marginal symbol of Ecclesia. It will be remembered that within the arch of the fifth Canon of the Soissons Gospels (fol. 10^v, Fig. 27) there was illustrated the figure of Christ Immanuel. It is, I think, important to note that Venice, 1635, also has, above the squared frame of the ninth and tenth Canons, a bust figure of the youthful, beardless Christ holding a scroll in the left hand and blessing with the right. This figure is inscribed: "Immanuel."¹⁴⁴

Opposite the Immanuel of the Soissons Gospels, above the sixth Canon (fol. 11^r), was the representation of the baptismal font. Above the squared frame of the fourth and fifth Canons of Venice, 1635, we find represented what is obviously a baptismal font.¹⁴⁵ It has no canopy, but attached to the circular wall of the *piscina* are animal-heads which spout water. These appear to be more like lion heads than heads of harts. Water fowl perch upon the edge of basins and drink from the water poured into them by the spouting animals.

One last detail that should be noted in this manuscript is the presence of the four beasts, symbols of the Evangelists, which are introduced as capitals of the columns that support the arches of the last two pages of the Canon Tables.¹⁴⁶

The comments of Nerses are interesting in another respect — one that has bearing on details in both Godescalc and Soissons. In describing the tenth Canon again, which "represents the Holy Church," the author says, "by her has been accomplished that which had been announced by the Prophets and by her began the work of the Apostles. That is why, instead of cocks, fishing birds have been chosen which are representations of the Apostles, fishers of men." Now the two large white birds flanking the *piscina* of folio 6^v of the Soissons Gospels (Fig. 26) are most definitely of the "fishing" variety — an ibis or crane(?) on the left, and a swan on the right. Some of the birds of Godescalc (Fig. 25) are also of the same category. In about the same relation to its font as are the ibis and swan to the font of Soissons are two birds facing out to left and right. In an analogy to the ibis

¹⁴⁴ Der Nersessian, *Manuscrits arméniens illustrés*, pl. XXII, and text, p. 58.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pl. XX.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pls. XXII, XXIII.

in Soissons, the bird on the left can also be termed an ibis (though not so well rendered) with a short tail of dark plumage characteristic of the male of the white ibis. Its opposite, on the right, has dark wings, a characteristic of the female of the same species. In any event, the two birds flanking the font in Soissons and the two in corresponding position in Godescalc are all "fishing birds." Here and there in the two pictures other aquatic birds can be found; the two at the ends of the cornice in Godescalc suggest a kind of duck.

Nerses adds other details for the tenth Canon: "Some of these [aquatic] birds are turned toward the cocks, for the Apostles translated what had been said by the Prophets and preach the same religion." A detail common to both Godescalc and folio 6^v of Soissons (Figs. 25 and 26) is that the pairs of birds at the top left and right consist of a cock apparently pursuing another bird, the latter turning its head and looking back at the cock. If the bird that turns its head toward the cock is a water fowl (as it seems to be in Godescalc at any rate, where it has many features of the cormorant), we have here a perfect agreement with Nerses' text which would interpret them as Apostles looking back at the Prophets and preaching the same religion.

Before the time of Nerses, with one possible exception, there is a complete absence of extant eastern sources from which he may have derived some of his ideas regarding the iconography of the Canon Tables. The one possible exception is the Georgian Bert'ay Gospels of the tenth century, where, however, the significance of the small building above two of its Canons is not clearly ascertainable. Nevertheless, it is, I think, more than a coincidence that the twelfth-century Armenian manuscript, Venice, 1635, should not only have echoed some of Nerses' ideas, but that it shares certain iconographic points with the Soissons Gospels of about A.D. 800 — namely — the use (once) of the symbolic beasts; the representation of Christ Immanuel at the head of one Canon; at the head of another the representation of a baptismal font.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, Nerses' remarks concerning the symbolism of the "fishing" birds and cocks, which could almost be taken as a description of certain details appearing in Soissons and Godescalc, can be added as indications that somehow the Armenians of Cilicia had come in contact with a tradition whose earliest record in art is found in Carolingian illumination. Is it possible that Nerses and some of his contemporary illuminators were influenced, to some extent, by western ideas? Nerses was a learned man, familiar with Latin as well as Byzantine literature.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, efforts to

¹⁴⁷ With the exception of the *Etimasia* placed over the head of Canon X (*ibid.*, pl. XXIII), no other symbols in the Canons of this Armenian manuscript have any very specific iconographic content.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

establish a union with the Church of Rome had been initiated and had made some progress more than fifty years earlier, under the leadership of the Catholicos Gregory II.¹⁴⁹ In the twelfth century, also, a variety of Latin rites were translated into Armenian even though they do not appear to have entered into common usage.¹⁵⁰ We shall see also, that certain motifs and meanings, similar to those we have found in our Carolingian representations of the *fons vitae*, traveled even farther and to more provincial regions than Cilicia, making a surprising appearance in Ethiopic books of the Gospels.¹⁵¹

The sum total of the evidence, both internal to the codices themselves and that derived from pertinent texts, is sufficient to indicate the uses to which the representations of the *fons vitae* were put by Carolingian painters. But the possibility remains that the Fountain of Life, as an iconographic type, may reflect other related significances besides those we have found from a study of their contexts in the manuscripts. We should, perhaps, pay more careful attention to a clue offered by the Lateran inscription: the distich in which the baptismal font is called *fons vitae*. It will be recalled that the second verse states that it takes its course from the wound of Christ. It is desirable to see therefore whether in the Fountain of Life in either or both of the Carolingian illuminations there is not also evidence of the Pauline doctrine that baptism is a figurative death and resurrection with Christ.

One remarkable feature of the Fountain of Life, which can be seen to best advantage in the Soissons version (Fig. 26) is that the *piscina* itself is laid out in the form of a hexagon, while the eight columns that grow out of it form an octagon. Now this is a very awkward arrangement, presenting certain difficulties to the painter. It is hardly possible to suppose, therefore, that there was not a very definite intent in such an arrangement. Is it possible that the picture involves a symbolic use of the hexagon and the octagon; a symbolism of the numbers six and eight?

It has been known for some time that the prevalent octagonal form in baptisteries and fonts had definite symbolic meaning.¹⁵² Perhaps that meaning can be more clearly stated than it has been thus far through a study of the combination of the six with the eight and their extension to the hexagon and the octagon which appear in combination in certain baptisteries (see Appendix B, below). The key to the meaning of the number eight with

¹⁴⁹ Tournebize, *op. cit.*, p. 163 ff.

¹⁵⁰ Conybeare, *op. cit.*, p. 508.

¹⁵¹ *Infra*, p. 104 f.

¹⁵² F. J. Dölger, "Zur Symbolik des altchristlichen Taufhauses," *Antike und Christentum*, 4 (1934), 153 ff.; R. Krautheimer, *op. cit.*

respect to baptism is found in the first four of the eight distichs which were inscribed around the font of Saint Ambrose's baptistery of Saint Thecla, at Milan. These verses, analogous to those at the Lateran, but probably placed there in the rebuilding at the end of the fifth century by the bishop Laurentius, have been preserved in the so-called *Sylloge Laureshamensis* (Cod. Vat. palat. 833 of the ninth century).¹⁵³ The first four distichs read as follows:

The temple of eight niches rose up for holy use,
 The octagonal fountain is appropriate for that rite [i.e. baptism].
 It was fitting that the house of holy baptism rise up in this number [i.e. 8]
 By which true salvation returned for mankind
 With the light of Christ rising again, of Christ who opens the gates of death
 And raises the dead from their tombs
 And freeing confessed sinners from the stain of sin
 Cleanses them with the water of the pure-flowing font.¹⁵⁴

It is immediately to be noted that the baptistery has eight niches and the font is octagonally composed because the number eight is somehow associated with the resurrection of Christ and the awakening of the dead. Unlike the ideas inherent in the documents we have thus far considered, the doctrines of baptism set forth in the Milan inscription have nothing to do with rebirth but center upon the Pauline teachings that liken baptism to death and resurrection.

As a symbol of the resurrection, the number eight is almost as old as the Christian Church. The Epistle of Barnabas,¹⁵⁵ for example, says: "The present sabbaths [i.e. the Jewish sabbath, seventh day of the Jewish week] are

¹⁵³ G. B. de Rossi, *Inscr. christ. urbis Romae*, II, 1, 161 n. 2; CIL, V, 617, 2; Dölger, *op. cit.*, 155, who assume their composition at the time of Saint Ambrose. On the other hand, P. Verzone, *L'architettura religiosa dell' alto medio evo nell' Italia settentrionale* (Milan, 1942), p. 70, attributes them to the period of Laurentius. See also A. De' Capitani d'Arzago, *Architetture dei secoli quarto e quinto in alta Italia* (Milan, 1944), p. 25, and for a report on recent excavations which laid bare the foundations of the baptistery but not the font, see *idem*, in *Miscell. in onore di A. Giussani* (Como, 1944), p. 185 ff.

¹⁵⁴ Octachorum s[an]c[t]os templum surrexit in usus,
 octagonus fons est munere dignus eo.
 Hoc numero decuit sacri baptismatis aulam
 surgere, quo populis vera salus rediit
 luce resurgentis Chr[ist]i, qui claustra resolvit
 mortis et e tumulis suscitavit exanimes
 confessosq[ue] reos maculoso crimine solvens
 fontis puriflui diluit inriguo.

¹⁵⁵ XV, 8, 9, MPG 2, 772: Οὐ τὰ νῦν Σάββατα ἐμοὶ δεκτά, ἀλλ' ἃ πεποίηκα, ἐν ᾧ καταπαύσας τὰ πάντα, ἀρχὴν ἡμέρας ὀγδόης ποιήσω, ὃ ἐστὶ, ἄλλου κόσμου ἀρχήν. Διὸ καὶ ἄγομεν τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ὀγδόην εἰς εὐφροσύνην, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ φανερωθεὶς ἀνέβη εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς. See also Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone Iudaeo*, 138, MPG 6, 793A, where the eighth day of Christ's resurrection is said to be foretold in the eight mortals saved in the ark of Noah.

not acceptable to me, but that which I have made, in which I will give rest to all things and make the beginning of an eighth day, that is the beginning of another world. Wherefore we also celebrate with gladness the eighth day in which Jesus also rose from the dead, and was made manifest, and ascended into Heaven.”¹⁵⁶ As Colson says, “We cannot in fact doubt for a moment that the Church from a very early date adopted the practice of meeting on what to the Jews was the first day of the week, to the general public the Sun’s day, and to Christians themselves the Lord’s day; and it is hardly less clear that the predominant reason they assigned for this at any rate in the second century was that it commemorated the Resurrection.”¹⁵⁷ Repeatedly in the writings of the early Church Fathers we encounter phrases such as “He [Christ] by His resurrection, sanctified the eighth day; it began likewise to be the first, which is the eighth, and the eighth which is the first. . . .”¹⁵⁸

The eight-part composition of the Baptistery of Saint Thecla at Milan is thus a reference to the eighth day, which is, as the Epistle of Barnabas explains, “the beginning of another world” and which, as the inscription explains, marks the awakening of the dead. In both of these explanations these things are likened to the eighth day on which Christ arose from the dead. The inscription thus likens the eight of baptism to the eighth age, and both to the day of Christ’s resurrection. This use of numbers applied to one of the days of Christ’s Passion, for symbolic purposes, is comparable to the symbolism of the triple immersion in baptism. According to Saint Leo: “Because by means of a sacramental representation and type, that which is done in the members corresponds to that which was done in the case of the Head himself; for in the rite of baptism, death enters in by the slaying of sin, and the threefold immersion imitates the three days’ burial, while the rising from the water is like the rising from the tomb.”¹⁵⁹ Cyril of Jerusalem had long since attributed the same meaning to triple immersion.¹⁶⁰ Numerological symbolism, with reference to the days of Holy Week, is thus applicable both to the rites of baptism, and to the architectural composition of baptismal fonts. (See Appendix B, in which this symbolism is applied to the architecture of baptisteries.)

An example of the real *mystique* of the number eight, as signifying the

¹⁵⁶ Translation of K. Lake in Loeb ed. of *Apostolic Fathers*, I, 395, 397.

¹⁵⁷ F. H. Colson, *The Week* (Cambridge, 1926), p. 88.

¹⁵⁸ Saint Ambrose, *Enarratio in psalmum XLVII*, MPL 14, 1201: “. . . et resurrectione sua octavam sanctificavit: coepit eadem prima esse, quae octava est, et octava quae prima.”

¹⁵⁹ *Ep.* XVI, 3, MPL 54, 698–699: “. . . et sepulturam triduanam imitatur trina demersio, et ab aquis elevatio, resurgentis instar est de sepulcro.” Cf. also Saint Gregory, *Ep.* XLIII, MPL 77, 497–498.

¹⁶⁰ *Catechesis* XX, *Mystagogica* III, 4, MPG 33, 1080B.

Resurrection, as well as implications of the symbolism of the numbers six and seven, is to be found in a Benediction appearing in some manuscripts of the Gregorian Sacramentary. The latter part of this prayer reads as follows: "Therefore may ye live in perfection of the number six in this age, and may ye rest in the number seven among the multitudes of the blessed spirits until ye be renewed by the resurrection in the number eight, and may ye receive remission in the year of the jubilee and attain the joys that will last without ceasing. Amen."¹⁶¹

This benediction indicates three stages of a transition through which man was to pass before "attaining to the Kingdom of which there is no end"¹⁶² that is prefigured by Christ's resurrection. One was to pass from this present age, symbolized by six, through the age of rest (seven), to the age marked by the resurrection (eight). Now this transition is none other than that expounded by Saint Augustine in terms of the last three days of Holy Week: "from this life into that rest we make a transition which our Lord Jesus Christ condescended to exemplify and consecrate in His Passion."¹⁶³ At the very end of his great work, *De Civitate Dei*,¹⁶⁴ Augustine presents his conception of the ages of mankind and the perpetual Sabbath, which he had already developed in part some twenty years earlier.¹⁶⁵ "There shall be the great Sabbath which has no evening," he tells us, because God rested upon the seventh day and sanctified it. "We shall ourselves be the seventh day, when we shall be filled and replenished with God's blessing and sanctification. There shall we be still [i.e. at rest] and know that He is God."

The present age in which we now live, as mortals, is for Augustine the sixth age of man. The first two of the six ages are: (1) from Adam to the Deluge; (2) from the Deluge to Abraham. Citing Matthew as his authority, Augustine agrees that there are three ages from Abraham to the Advent of Christ: (3) from Abraham to David; (4) from David to the Captivity; (5) "from the Captivity to the Birth of Christ in the flesh." Our age follows: "The sixth age is now passing, and cannot be measured by any number of

¹⁶¹ Muratori, *Liturgia Romana*, II, 364. "Quo sic in senarii numeri perfectione in hoc Saeculo vivatis, et in septenario inter beatorum Spirituum agmina requiescat, quatenus in octavo resurrectione renovati jubilaei, remissione ditati, ad gaudia sine fine mansura perveniat. Amen." Cf. also H. A. Wilson, *The Gregorian Sacramentary* (London, 1915), p. 304.

¹⁶² Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XXII, 30, 5, MPL 41, 804.

¹⁶³ *Ep.* LV, cap. IX, 17, MPL 33, 212: "in eam nobis ex hac vita fit transitus, quem Dominus noster Jesus Christus sua passione praemonstrare ac consecrare dignatus est."

¹⁶⁴ XXII, 30, 4-6, MPL 41, 803, 804. This work was commenced ca. 413 and not finished before ca. 426.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. note 167 below.

generations.”¹⁶⁶ That is, the end of the world is not to be foretold by any man (Acts 1:7), whereas the exact number of generations in each of the preceding five ages is known: ten generations in each of the first two, and fourteen in each of the last three. Augustine continues: “After this period [i.e. the present, or sixth age] God shall rest, as on the seventh day, when He shall give us, who shall be the seventh day, rest in Himself . . . Suffice it to say that the seventh shall be our Sabbath, which shall be brought to a close, not by an evening, but by the Lord’s day, as an eighth and eternal day, consecrated by the resurrection of Christ, and prefiguring the eternal repose not only of the spirit, but also of the body.”

But the best exposition of the mystical content of the benediction is Augustine’s *Epistola LV, ad Inquisitiones Januarii*,¹⁶⁷ a full explanation of the significance of *Pascha*, and so useful in explaining the symbolism of the numbers six, seven, and eight that it should be examined for the light it throws not only on these general questions but upon the meaning of baptism associated with them. Thus, perhaps, a further understanding of the use of the hexagonal font and the eight columns of the *fons vitae* of the Soissons Gospels as well as a similar numerological symbolism in the construction of baptisteries and fonts (see Appendix B), can be achieved.¹⁶⁸

The question Augustine proposes to answer is, “Why does the anniversary on which we celebrate the Passion of the Lord not fall, like the day which tradition has handed down as the day of His birth, on the same day of the year?”¹⁶⁹ The answer involves Augustine in a lengthy discussion of the reasons for the movable, or sacramental, feasts of Christ’s Passion and their relation to the established days of the week. “We observe Easter [*Pascha*],” says Augustine, “in such a manner as not only to recall the facts of the death and resurrection of Christ to remembrance, but also . . . to give evidence as to the import of the sacrament.”¹⁷⁰

Augustine then explains that the Jews keep the Passover on the Sabbath that falls between the fourteenth and the twenty-first days of the first month – whatever day of the month that might be. But it was in accordance with God’s plan that the Jewish Sabbath of the Passover, in the year of Christ’s

¹⁶⁶ This arrangement of the ages of the world was probably first propounded by Augustine. It was remarkably tenacious throughout the Middle Ages. Sicardus of Cremona, for example, in the thirteenth century records this precise arrangement in *Mitræ*, MPL 213, 257B.

¹⁶⁷ MPL 33, 204 ff. Written shortly after A.D. 400. My quotations are from the translation of J. G. Cunningham in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ser. 1, vol. 1, pp. 303–316.

¹⁶⁸ In citing the following texts of Saint Augustine, it should not be assumed that he was the originator of these particular mystical doctrines, nor were they necessarily the direct source of inspiration for the iconography of the *fons vitae*.

¹⁶⁹ I, 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Passion, should fall on the day between His death and His resurrection. This plan had some good reason.¹⁷¹ It is in this way that the Jewish Sabbath, sanctified by God at the Creation and consecrated as a day of rest, prefigures to the Christian the seventh age. "Since through rest we get back to that original life which the soul lost by sin, the emblem of this rest is the seventh day of the week."¹⁷² (This is what is meant by the phrase "and may ye rest in the number seven" in the Benediction of the Gregorian Sacramentary.) Augustine continues, "If in reading Genesis you search the record of the seven days, you will find that there was no evening of the seventh day, which signifies that the rest of which it was a type was eternal."¹⁷³ "And because God sanctified the seventh day . . . [we are not] to suppose that we attain to rest in this present life."¹⁷⁴ (Compare the statement in the benediction that "rest in the number seven" is to be had "among the multitudes of the blessed spirits," i.e. not in this, but the life beyond.)

The significance of the "eighth day" is explained by Augustine as follows: "Although the sacramental import of the eighth number, as signifying the resurrection, was by no means concealed from the holy men of old who were filled with the spirit of prophecy . . .¹⁷⁵ nevertheless, before the resurrection of the Lord, it was reserved and hidden, and the Sabbath alone was appointed to be observed because before that event there was indeed the repose of the dead (of which the Sabbath rest was a type), but there was not any instance of the resurrection of one who, rising from the dead, was no more to die, and over whom death should no longer have dominion; this being done in order that, from the time that such a resurrection did take place in the Lord's own body . . . the day upon which He rose, the eighth day namely¹⁷⁶ (which is the same with the first of the week), should begin to

¹⁷¹ IX, 16.

¹⁷² IX, 17: "propterea sabbato requies significatur." Augustine uses the term *sabbati* with the sense of "seventh day of the week." When he wishes to refer to the "first day of the week" he uses *una sabbati* ("per unam sabbati, quem diem dominicum dicimus, figuratur"). Augustine explains this usage himself. In *Ep.* XXXVI, 12, 28, he says: "The day now known as the Lord's day was then [i.e. in Apostolic times] called the first day of the week [*una sabbati*] . . . for the day of the Lord's resurrection is called by Matthew *μία σαββάτων* [Matt. 28:1] and by the other three evangelists *ἡ μία (τῶν) σαββάτων* [Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1]."

¹⁷³ IX, 17.

¹⁷⁴ XI, 20.

¹⁷⁵ XIII, 23: "quamvis sanctos patres plenos prophetico spiritu octavi sacramentum nequaquam lateret, quo significatur resurrectio" refers to Ps. 6 and 12 where, in their titles, Augustine says, "we find the words 'for the eighth,' and infants were circumcised on the eighth day; and in Ecclesiastes it is said, with allusion to the two covenants, 'Give a portion to seven, and also to eight.'"

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*: "ut postquam facta est talis resurrectio in corpore Domini, . . . jam etiam dies dominicus, id est octavus, qui et primus, inciperet celebrari."

be observed as the Lord's day." (Compare the reference to the number eight in the benediction of the Gregorian Sacramentary.)

Now the sixth day is that of Christ's crucifixion, and it was sometimes so designated: *sexta sabbati crucifixo*.¹⁷⁷ In regard to this day, Augustine says: "Consider now with attention these three most sacred days, the days signalized by (1) the Lord's crucifixion, (2) rest in the grave, and (3) resurrection. Of these three that [day] of which the cross is the symbol [i.e. the sixth day], is the business of our present life [compare the statement of the benediction, "may ye live in perfection"¹⁷⁸ of the number six in this age"] . . . The period during which our labors tend to the weakening and destruction of the body of sin, during which the outward man is perishing . . . that is the period of the cross."¹⁷⁹ The sixth day is thus the symbol of the "destruction of the body of sin" in the present life — Augustine's sixth age of man.

It is interesting to note that Augustine, as well as the Milan inscription, relates the meaning of these sacred days to baptism. This is done by pointing out that the "things which are symbolized by His rest in the grave and His resurrection" (the perpetual Sabbath and the Resurrection of the Dead, previously symbolized by the numbers seven and eight) are not yet achieved but are held by Christians in faith and hope. Augustine then states in the same section, but largely repeated from an earlier passage,¹⁸⁰ that in the present age (Augustine's sixth), "we have begun to be under grace [and] we are already dead together with Christ, and buried together with Him *by baptism* into death." Thus the "destruction of the body of sin," in this age, is accomplished for the Christian through baptism.

Elsewhere Augustine even associates these matters with the relation between Christ and Ecclesia by contrasting and paralleling what occurred in the sixth day of creation and in the sixth age of man (i.e. the present age, since the Incarnation). "On the sixth day man is formed after the image of God; in the sixth period of the world there is the clear discovery of our transformation in the renewing of our mind . . . as a wife was made for Adam from his side while he slept [i.e. on the sixth day of creation] Ecclesia becomes the property of her dying Saviour by the sacrament of the blood

¹⁷⁷ E.g., John Cassian, *De Coenobiorum Inst.*, III, 9, MPL 49, 144.

¹⁷⁸ Augustine, and after him numerous writers, held that six was a perfect number. In *De Civitate Dei*, XI, 30 he says, "Six is a perfect number . . . because the perfection of the works [of creation] was signified by the number six . . . [It] is the first [number] which is made up of its own parts, of its sixth, third and half which are respectively one, two and three and which make a total of six etc." Cf. V. F. Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism* (New York, 1938), p. 86.

¹⁷⁹ XIV, 24.

¹⁸⁰ II, 3.

which flowed from His side after His death [i.e. the sixth day of Passion week as well as the sixth age of man].”¹⁸¹

The symbolism of baptism expressed in terms of the three numbers which we have found to be partially explained in the inscription of the Milan font, and noted also in the iconography of the *fons vitae* of Soissons, can be summarized now by recourse to Augustine’s allegory¹⁸² of the sacramental significance of the celebration of the days of Christ’s Passion. These days, we have seen, are first of all paralleled in the days of creation. Upon the sixth day Eve was created from the side of Adam as he slept, just as Ecclesia “became the property of her dying Saviour by the sacrament of blood which flowed from [Christ’s] side after His death”; the seventh day, the Jewish Sabbath, was consecrated at the Creation as a day of rest, just as Christ rested in the grave upon the seventh day. But these days are also paralleled in the ages of mankind and the ages to come. The sixth day of Passion week represents the sixth, or present, age of man from which we are to make a transition to the perpetual Sabbath of rest in Christ (the seventh age) and to the Lord’s day, “as an eighth and eternal day, consecrated by the resurrection of Christ.” But according to Augustine it was in the present age, the sixth, marked by the Incarnation of Our Lord,¹⁸³ that Ecclesia was created from the side of the “dying Saviour”; that it is the period during which “the outward man is perishing” and “the body of sin” is destroyed; and that in it “we have begun to be under grace,” and “are already dead together with Christ and buried together with Him by baptism into death.”

¹⁸¹ *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, XII, 8, MPL 42, 257. Here he gives the same divisions for the six ages of the world that are contained in *De Civ. Dei*. For similar remarks of Augustine on Ecclesia and baptism, see *De Genesi contra Manich.*, II, 24, MPL 34, 216; *Tractatus XV*, 4, MPL 35, 1513.

¹⁸² An interesting defense of his allegorical method of teaching the “truth by emblems” is contained in *Ep.* 55, XI, 21: “Thus presented, things move and kindle our affection much more than if they were set forth in bald statements, not clothed with sacramental symbols. Why this should be, is hard to say; but it is the fact that anything which we are taught by allegory or emblems affects and pleases us more. . . .”

¹⁸³ A cross-current, involving the use made of the *fons vitae* in Godescalc, is that there is some basis for thinking that the number six might symbolize the Incarnation as well as the Crucifixion. It was commonly held that the Conception of Christ occurred upon the same day of the year as His Crucifixion, and on a Friday. Cf. Cyril of Alexandria’s letter to Leo the Great, MPL 54, 605, 606; also Bede, *De temporum ratione*, XXX, line 41, in C. W. Jones, *Beda opera de temporibus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1943), p. 236; *ibid.*, p. 6. Cosmas Indicopleustes (*Christian Topography*, V, 195B, Winstedt ed., 136, lines 6–8) concurs in the belief that the conception of Christ took place in the same season of the year as His resurrection. He lists other events that are to be compared to the Resurrection because they occurred at the same season and were “a shadow and type” of the renovation of the world through the Resurrection. Among these were the Passover of the Israelites as they prepared to leave Egypt and bondage; the beginning again, with Noah, after the deluge. The resurrection of the dead “and the eternal rest” will also take place then.

Baptism as a rite that expresses the faith and hope, in this life, of the ultimate attainment of the "Kingdom of which there is no end" is, in our pictures, represented by the transition from the six to the eight. As the Benediction of the Gregorian Sacramentary expressed it, the end of the transition is "remission in the year of the jubilee and attainment of the joys that will last without ceasing"¹⁸⁴ — that is, resurrection and immortality. Attention should therefore be called to the presence in all our examples of the *fons vitae* (including the Ethiopic which will be discussed later)¹⁸⁵ of confronted peacocks flanking the peak of the roof which covers the dome. There is little doubt that the peacock was employed at times in Christian art specifically as a symbol of celestial immortality, resurrection, incorruptibility, or eternal beatitude.¹⁸⁶ The fact that these peacocks are placed as they are, in conjunction with the dome (in Soissons at any rate), further suggests that the immortality is celestial.¹⁸⁷ The peacocks thus lend themselves very precisely to the symbolic content found in the hexagon and the octagon. This symbolism involves the Pauline doctrine and in the end results in a similar interpretation of the meaning of the fountain (baptism and Ecclesia) that we have already obtained through an examination of the contexts in which it appears in the manuscripts where, as we saw, the Johannine doctrine was also involved.

All these varying symbols of baptism were succinctly summed up by Rupert of Deutz. We have already seen how he uses the Johannine significance of baptism as rebirth (p. 75 and note 128), in which he likens the font to the wombs of the Church and of Mary. Continuing that passage Rupert says, "The Apostle also [said] 'Therefore we are buried with Him

¹⁸⁴ *Supra*, pp. 82 f.

¹⁸⁵ *Infra*, pp. 104 f. and Figs. 53, 54.

¹⁸⁶ This despite the inability of H. Lothar (*Der Pfau in der altchristl. Kunst*, Leipzig, 1929) to find such specific meanings in Christian funerary art of the first four centuries. See, however, Cabrol, Leclercq, *Dict. d'archéol. chrét.*, 13, pt. 1, 1075 ff. (*paon*). There is no doubt at all that in Roman art and literature the peacock was the symbol of apotheosis for empresses and even female personages of lesser rank, the counterpart of the eagle of apotheosis for emperors. (See F. Cumont, *Études syriennes*, Paris, 1917, pp. 84–87 and fig. 38 illustrating the peacock as bearer of Claudia Helpis in the manner of imperial apotheosis.) In Christian literature Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, XXI, 4) calls the flesh of the peacock "incorruptible." There is, however, a surprising lack of early, Christian, texts on the meaning of this bird. From later centuries we have the testimony of Anthony of Padua (*Serm. fer. V post Trin.*) who speaks of the peacock as rejecting the feathers of mortality and receiving those of immortality. On the pagan antecedents of this symbolism, see F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* (Paris, 1926), p. 228 f.

¹⁸⁷ On the dome as a representation of the celestial sphere see Karl Lehmann, "The Dome of Heaven," *Art Bull.*, XXVII (1945), 3 ff.; A. Grabar, "Le témoignage d'une hymne syriaque sur l'architecture de la Cathédrale d'Édesse au VI^e siècle et sur la symbolique de l'édifice chrétien," *Cahiers archéol.*, II (1947), 41 ff; E. Baldwin Smith, *The Dome: a Study in the History of Ideas* (Princeton, 1950), *passim*.

by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ rose from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' Thus one and the same font is *both a womb and a sepulcher* for us. A womb, because, as Christ says, we are re-born; a sepulcher because, as the Apostle of Christ says, we are both buried there along with Christ, and thence we rise again along with Christ."

The earliest extant pictures that depict these mysteries are the Latin Carolingian illuminations. They employ the baptismal font as the vehicle for symbolic expression. With the exception of the two very late Ethiopic examples (Figs. 53, 54), there are no other pictures that fall in exactly the same category. However, there is another group of illuminations, extant only in provincial East Christian manuscripts, in which the same tholos-type of structure is used as a means of conveying a possibly related content in that the Fountain of Life is represented, not as a baptismal font with connotations of rebirth, but as a sepulcher.

Those who have dealt with the problem of the Carolingian *fons vitae* have usually compared it to the Armenian "tempietto" or tholos; or rather they have compared the "tempietto" to the Carolingian examples, for most of the serious treatments of the subject have begun by assuming that the *fons vitae* derived from the "tempietto," and that both pictures, therefore, have either an East Christian or a vaguely "oriental" origin.¹⁸⁸ The Armenian manuscript illuminations, some of which have heretofore been used as a basis of comparison to the Carolingian, are: folio 5^v of the Etchmiadzin Gospels, No. 229, dated A.D. 989 (Fig. 35);¹⁸⁹ folio 7^r of the Gospels of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem, No. 2555 (Fig. 36);¹⁹⁰ folio 6^r of the fragmentary Gospels of the Mekhitarist Library in Vienna, No. 697 (Fig. 37);¹⁹¹ the recently discovered page from a lost manuscript, probably a book of the Gospels, in the State Repository of Manuscripts, Erivan (Fig. 38);¹⁹² and folio 3^r of the Gospels of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jeru-

¹⁸⁸ The most important works on the subject, and the most influential in the formation of the views generally held regarding the "tempietto" and the Fountain of Life, are J. Strzygowski, "Das Etschmiadzin-Evangelium," *Byzantinische Denkmäler*, I (Vienna, 1891), 58 ff.; *idem*, "Der Pinienzapfen als Wasserspeier," *Röm. Mitt.*, 18 (1903), 199 f.; *idem*, "Ein zweites Etschmiadzin-Evangelium," in *Huscharizan, Festschrift aus Anlass des 100 jährigen Bestandes der Mechitharisten-Kongregation in Wien* (1911), pp. 345-352; Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "The Date of the Initial Miniatures of the Etchmiadzin Gospel," *Art Bull.*, 15 (1933), 341-345; C. Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln* (Göteborg, 1938), p. 102 ff.

¹⁸⁹ See H. Buchthal and O. Kurz, *A Handlist of Illuminated Oriental Christian Mss.* (London, 1942), no. 360, for bibliography.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 416.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, no. 529.

¹⁹² First published by A. Svirin, "Armenian Art Exhibition," *Iskusstvo*, March-April, 1940, fig. p. 47. See H. Buchthal and O. Kurz, *op. cit.*, no. 382.

saalem, No. 2562(Fig. 34), hitherto unpublished.^{192a} In all these the tholos appears immediately after the last page of the Canon Tables, except, of course, for the Erivan page whose context is unknown.

The similarities between individual members of the two groups, Carolingian and Armenian, have often been stressed, but not enough emphasis has been given to their differences. The fundamental difference is that the Armenian tholos contains nothing within the structure save hanging lamps, and is entirely devoid of any elements of a fountain or baptismal font; in other words, only the superstructure of columns and roof bears a resemblance to the Carolingian *fons vitae*. But that resemblance, particularly of the tholos of Etchmiadzin (Fig. 35) to the *tegurium fontis* of Godescalc (Fig. 25), is amazingly close if we disregard the fact that the former shows only four columns — so close indeed, as to justify the assumption of a common heritage. And even this difference comes to be of no significance when it is realized that the tholos of Jerusalem 2555 (Fig. 36) supplies the eight columns, thus indicating that the family tree of the Armenian examples contained even this feature in common with that of the Carolingian.

In addition to the basic difference just noted, the following should also be held firmly in mind: (1) The Armenian tholoi emphasize plant growths upon the roof where shrubs or small trees grow in rank density (Erivan fragment, Fig. 38), or flowering vines take root in great profusion (in all other examples). These are entirely lacking in the Soissons Gospels. In Godescalc a sprig of vine accompanies each bird, no matter where it is placed, and it is entirely fortuitous that two or three sprigs come in contact with the roof in the cases where the birds appear to be placed upon the roof (ducks and peacocks). But more important, the Armenian group, with the single exception of Jerusalem 2555, consistently present two trees of a tall pointed variety, arranged heraldically, one on either side springing from the ground close to the outermost column bases. This feature, to which I wish to call particular attention, is lacking entirely in the Carolingian examples. (2) Every one of the Armenian group has knotted or parted curtains suspended in the intercolumniations. (3) Only birds (ducks in Etchmiadzin and Jerusalem 2555, ibis[?] in the latter and in Erivan, and a long-tailed bird in Jerusalem 2555) are used in the Armenian examples, and then only upon the plant life on the roof, not upon the ground and in the background as in Godescalc and Soissons. Harts never appear with the Armenian version of the tholos.

^{192a} I am indebted to the Library of Congress, Photoduplication Service, for permission to publish this miniature photographed by them in 1950 during the expedition sponsored jointly with the American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, and to Professor Der Nersessian for calling it to my attention.

The similarity of architectural forms in the Armenian tholos and the *tegurium fontis* of the Carolingian illustrations does strongly suggest that there may also be points in common in their symbolism. That the Eastern artists on the one hand and the Western on the other may have employed two different structures, similar in form but different in function, as vehicles for the expression of a similar symbolic content is now a consideration which we should take up. But the very emptiness of the "tempietto" lends such an enigmatic air of mystery that at first it seems impossible to determine what is represented. Perhaps this very emptiness and mystery is of some significance.

There are, however, two additional related monuments that will perhaps serve as a clue to the enigma of a circular columnar structure whose parted hangings reveal an emptiness. The first of these is a carved stone slab now in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection of Harvard University, herewith published for the first time (Figs. 39, 40). The obverse side presents, in low relief, a round columnar structure (eight columns, of which only the front four are indicated, as in the Etchmiadzin and other tholoi ?) with a conical roof depicted as seen from above, in contrast to all of our other examples.¹⁹³ At the peak of the roof is a globe with a cross incised upon its surface. The cross in all other examples stands upon the globe or disc, or at any rate is free-standing. These features appear to be a bald statement of the more fancifully treated superstructures of the *fons vitae* and the "tempietto." The formal similarity ends there, for quite obviously the structure does not cover the basin of one, or the parted or knotted hangings of the other group, or the animal and vegetable life of either. Because of the absence of the font, however, and its reputed Syrian provenience, it appears to have a closer relation to the Armenian tholos, and therefore may shed some light upon the significance of the latter, or at any rate upon the significance of the type of structure from which the Armenian tholos may be thought to have derived.

But the elements contained within the central intercolumniation have a direct bearing upon the numerological symbolism we have obtained from our study of the *fons vitae* and the texts that explain it. Resting upon the ground line in the center is a cross carved in relief. It rests upon a trilobed representation of Golgotha. Directly above it is a small rectangular hole, or sinking, while below the hole and slightly to the left is a rhomboidal block carved in relief.

¹⁹³ Accession No. 38.56. Height 67 cm., width 57 cm. Said to have come from Syria. Surfaces of obverse heavily painted: blue (field and outer columns), red (inner columns, cross, and countersunk opening of tomb). The reverse (which has no bearing on the subject of this paper) is illustrated in our Fig. 40. It presents a fluted kantharos in low relief on which faint traces of color are discernible. The slab seems originally to have been rectangular, for all but the lower parts of the handles of the vessel have been cut off in shaping the stone to the form of the tholos on the obverse.

The meaning of the cross is, of course, self-evident. The hole above it, and the rhomb, which, if made rectangular, would exactly fit the hole, are quite surely representations of the entrance to the tomb and the stone which has been removed. The stone is rhomboidal because it is shown in a kind of perspective. This becomes clear if we make reference to the representation of the Holy Sepulcher and its stone in the scene of the Holy Women at the Tomb in the mosaics of S. Apollinare Nuovo, at Ravenna¹⁹⁴ (Fig. 41), or the stone in front of the sepulcher in one of the Monza ampullae¹⁹⁵ (Fig. 42).

Just as we found reference, by means of the symbolism of numbers, to the day of the cross and the day of the resurrection in the *fons vitae* of the Soissons Gospels, so in this relief we have an even more direct reference to the cross and to the empty tomb of the resurrection. As always, in dealing with representations of this sort which are to be regarded primarily as symbols, we are confronted with the question whether or not it was the intent of the carver to record a particular shrine or shrines in a manner at all factual. It is the same problem that has confronted those who have attempted to interpret the ampullae of Monza and Bobbio in their relation to the Holy Sites of Jerusalem. It is quite apparent that the wide divergence of detail within such a homogeneous group as the ampullae themselves in recording the forms of the structures to which they wish to refer indicates that some, if not all, are to be regarded as little more than shorthand general statements of the appearance and composition of the "rock-hewn tomb" or the colonnaded *tegurium* that enclosed it. Our relief goes much further in this direction than do the ampullae. For example, it makes no use of the lattice-work grilles, the *transvolatile argenteum et aureum* of the Breviarius of Jerusalem¹⁹⁶ which most of the ampullae depict (Fig. 42). Nor is there any record, either in the descriptive texts of the *Itineraries*, or in the more circumstantially depicted and more reliable versions of the ampullae, of a cross placed in front of the entrance to the tomb in any such position as that given by our relief. The ampullae, however, sometimes place such a cross above the entrance to the tomb (Fig. 43).¹⁹⁷ These discrepancies thus indicate a freedom on the part of the carver of the relief, both in the selection of elements which the tomb did contain, and in their location in the composition. But none the less it can be said that the shrines at Jerusalem were the formal

¹⁹⁴ C. Ricci, *Ravenna* (Italia Artistica, No. 1), 1905, fig. 78. Here the *tegurium* is also a four-columned structure with a pointed roof seen from above.

¹⁹⁵ R. Garrucci, *Stor. della arte crist.*, VI, pl. 434, no. 5.

¹⁹⁶ T. Tobler, *Itinera et descript. Terrae Sanctae*, I (Geneva, 1877), 58; Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem*, II, fasc. 1-2, 215; *Itinera Hierosolymitana*, CSEL, 39 (ed. P. Geyer), 153 ff.

¹⁹⁷ For example, Bobbio ampulla no. A1, G. Celi, "Cimeli Bobbiesi," *La civiltà cattolica*, 74 (1923), vol. 3, p. 336.

motivation for the relief — a composite of the two most popular images on the Monza and Bobbio phials: the Crucifixion, as symbolized by the representation of the “life-giving tree” of the cross; and the Resurrection, indicated by the scene of the Marys and the angel at the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

The second monument, which is even more clearly related to the tholoi of the Armenian Gospels, is the miniature on folio 5^v of the Georgian “Adysh” Gospels (Fig. 44) dated A.D. 897 and thus in all probability earlier than any of the surviving Armenian examples.¹⁹⁸ Indeed it is clearly an additional member of the group, and is employed in precisely the same way, as a termination to the Canon Tables. Other points it has in common with the Armenian are a rank growth of vines on its conical roof and birds (one can dimly be seen on the right) in proximity to them, and a knotted curtain hanging in the center intercolumniation. But the main point of difference, and the most important and revealing feature of this version is the presence of the *transvolatile*, the lattice-work grilles of the Monza and Bobbio phials, which nearly fill the two outermost intercolumniations. On the face of it, this is by way of reference to the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem. Unlike any of the other versions of the “tempietto” or *fons vitae*, the intercolumniations are spanned by arches. Here again it conforms to the more circumstantial (and possibly more reliable) versions of the *tegurium* in the Monza ampullae (Figs. 42, 52).¹⁹⁹

Some inscriptions that appear on the page of the Adysh tholos confirm this interpretation. These inscriptions, in so far as it was possible to decipher them from the reproduction in the *Materialy*, were very kindly translated for me by Professor Robert P. Blake, whose help I gratefully acknowledge. They are: (1) On the axis, immediately beneath the structure, in a ninth or tenth century hand which Blake believed might be contemporary to the writing of the manuscript: “Holy resurrection on Sunday.” (2) Below, in the margin to the right, in a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century hand, is an inscription which carries over onto the opposite page (containing the first seven verses of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew), which reads: “On the Sunday before the birth of Christ, the Gospel . . .” (the rest is illegible). The same hand has written above this, in the right margin: “My parents

¹⁹⁸ Adysh, Treasury of the Church. Written at the Monastery of Shatberd. Buchthal, Kurz, *op. cit.*, no. 533. For facsimile of miniatures and text, see *Materialy po arkheologii Kavkaza*, XIV (Moscow, 1916), pl. 5.

¹⁹⁹ Sometimes the Monza phials seem to show the entrance to the “cabin” or rock-hewn tomb, rather than the *tegurium* surrounding it. (See Garrucci, *op. cit.*, pl. 433, fig. 8 and pl. 434, figs. 2, 7). In other cases the “cabin” seems to be indicated within the *tegurium*, as in pl. 434, fig. 4 and pl. 435, fig. 1 (our Fig. 50). In these cases the *tegurium* is much more schematized and takes on the appearance of a four-columned ciborium.

. . . who remember us . . . remember you . . .” (3) Within the central intercolumniation, again in a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century hand, but not that of No. 2: “At the resurrection of the dead, O God, and Father, and Son and Holy Spirit . . . Four Gospels . . . and . . . of the resurrection unworthy be . . .” (the rest is illegible).

The important inscription is the first, because of its formal relation to the picture (a subscription, or title) and because it is more or less contemporary to the manuscript. Its significance becomes apparent if it is taken in conjunction with the second inscription. The latter, which really has no rightful place on the frontispiece, doubtless proceeds, on the first page of the text of Matthew, to record the verses from that Gospel that were to be read in the *Synaxis* of “the Sunday before the birth of Christ,” quite probably the *Liber generationis Christi*. The earlier inscription, which is of particular interest to us, might thus be viewed as a reference to the Gospel lection for Sundays. But why, in the first instance, unlike the second, is the precise lection not cited, nor the particular Sunday identified? Is it possible that the Gospel reading was identified by the words “Holy resurrection,” and that no specific Sunday was mentioned because the Gospel accounts of Christ’s resurrection were read every Sunday throughout the year?

This would seem to be the case if one can judge the probabilities from certain available facts regarding the liturgical usages in the Georgian Church of the ninth century. It has been established that, like the Armenian, the Georgian liturgy of the earlier centuries was based upon the rites of Jerusalem. In Georgia this was true up to the tenth century.²⁰⁰ Now there is very specific evidence that in the early centuries of the Church of Jerusalem the Gospel lection for all the Sundays throughout the year consisted of the Gospel accounts of the resurrection.²⁰¹ The Latin pilgrim, Aetheria (late fourth century), for example, records that at Jerusalem, if the day was a Sunday, the bishop read the *evangelium iuxta consuetudinem intro Anastase locum resurrectionis Domini, qui semper dominica die legitur*.²⁰² Furthermore, the Armenian lectionary of the eighth century, according to

²⁰⁰ Fr. M. Tarchnišvili, “Die georgische Übersetzung der Liturgie des hl. Joh. Chrysostomus,” *Jahrb. für Liturgiewissenschaft*, XIV (1934), 81: “bis zum 10. Jh. in Georgien und in georgischen Kolonien nicht die byzantinische, sondern die syro-palästinensische Liturgie, die Jacobus (und Petrus) in Gebrauch war.”

²⁰¹ This was eminently suitable if it is recalled that the early Christians selected the eighth day of the week, “which is the same as the first,” to be the holy Christian day because it commemorated Christ’s resurrection upon the day following the Jewish Sabbath, which was the seventh day. See above, pp. 81 ff.

²⁰² *Itin. Hierosol.*, CSEL, 39, 96.

John of Odsun, the Catholicos of about A.D. 718, was the same as that used by the Church of Jerusalem.²⁰³ This is borne out by the fact that an early Armenian lectionary of the eighth or ninth century not only refers to the Churches of Jerusalem in its rubrics, but its contents correspond in general to the description of the rites at Jerusalem at the close of the fourth century as provided by Aetheria. The fact that this lectionary contains no instructions for Gospel lections on the Sundays indicates that it was unnecessary to do so.

The first of the inscriptions from Adysh, "Holy resurrection on Sunday," would thus seem to be a recognition of the main function of the Sunday *Synaxis*: a commemoration of the resurrection of Christ.²⁰⁴ The inscription, with this signification, placed beneath the tholos, serves to identify it as a picture of the tomb from which Christ arose, the place where the Gospel accounts of the resurrection were read each Sunday in Jerusalem.

Because of the obvious representation of the Holy Sepulcher in these two monuments (Adysh "tempietto" and Dumbarton Oaks plaque), and their equally apparent relation to the Armenian group (particularly on the part of the Adysh Gospels), it can now be said with considerable certainty that the Holy Sepulcher was likewise the motivating source for the Armenian "tempietto," and that the *tegurium* of the Holy Sepulcher is the underlying medium for the expression of whatever significance the picture was intended to convey.

In order to discover what the Armenian miniaturists may have intended to convey through the medium of the Holy Sepulcher, it would be well to turn to the texts, both Greek and Armenian, in which reference is made to the Holy Sepulcher, and see what epithets are applied to it. Prior to the rebuilding of the holy sites at Jerusalem by Modestos, the Abbot of the monastery of Saint Theodore, about the year 614, there appears to be no great uniformity in the epithets applied to the Holy Sepulcher. Eusebius, for example, speaks of it varyingly as the "monument of immortality," or "grotto of salvation,"²⁰⁵ usually employing the term *ἄντρον*. Cyril of Jerusalem usually calls it "monument of salvation," "shelter of the rock," or "sanctuary of the resurrection."²⁰⁶ The Latin Pilgrim texts of this earlier period use

²⁰³ Conybeare, *op. cit.*, p. 181 and note (a); p. 508.

²⁰⁴ The second inscription, referring to a lection from the first chapter of Matthew on the last Sunday in Advent, does not affect us because by the fifteenth century changes had been made in the calendar of feasts.

²⁰⁵ *De Vita Const.*, III, 26, MPG 20, 1085: τῆς ἀθανασίας μνῆμα . . . τὸ σωτήριον ἄντρον.

²⁰⁶ Catechesis XIV, *De Christi Resurrectione*, 9, MPG 33, 833B: τὸ σωτήριον μνῆμα . . . σκέπη τῆς πέτρας. Catechesis XVIII, *De Carnis Resurrectione*, 33, *loc. cit.*, 1056A: ὁ ἅγιος τῆς ἀναστάσεως τόπος.

various terms such as *spelunca*, or *crypta*,²⁰⁷ which they merely say is that of the Lord, Saviour, or of the Resurrection.²⁰⁸

But as soon as we come into the seventh century it is noticeable that with one accord the Holy Sepulcher is denoted as being "life-giving," "life-bearing," and still more interesting and important, the "source" or "fountain of our resurrection," or even "fountain of life." One of the most pertinent texts possible for our purposes would be that written by the man who was himself directly responsible for the restoration of the tomb about the year 614, and, moreover, addressed to an Armenian. In a letter written to Komitas, Archbishop and Metropolitan of Armenia, Modestos writes:²⁰⁹ "They [i.e. the Jews who had taken the side of the Persians in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and who were for a time forbidden to return to the city] are no longer judged worthy of beholding the venerable and adorable Passion, nor the holy *sepulcher which has contained life*, nor holy Golgotha, gloriously made new again." As we shall see from the usages of others, the word Modestos used to indicate the sepulcher as container, or bearer, of life was in all probability ζωηφόρος. Another Armenian text, probably of seventh-century origin but incorporated into the later *History of the Agvanians* by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, twice makes use of the same phrase in describing the rock-hewn tomb of the resurrection. There it is said to be *kenarar*, "life-bearing."²¹⁰

Now John of Damascus, in writing his *De Imaginibus*, about the year 730,²¹¹ was very partial to the epithet ζωηφόρος when speaking of the Holy Sepulcher, although he also employed other synonymous terms. For example, in Oratio I²¹² he says, Ἡ οὐχ ὕλη ἡ φερέσβιος πέτρα καὶ ζωηφόρος, ὁ τάφος ὁ ἅγιος, ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ἡμῶν ἀναστάσεως. Here he uses the synonyms φερέσβιος and ζωηφόρος with regard to the sepulcher, but he also terms it ἡ πηγὴ ("fountain," "source," or "spring") of our resurrection.²¹³ Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople in the second half of the ninth century, uses much the same terminology: "the sepulcher, fountain of our immortality" (ἡ γὰρ πηγὴ

²⁰⁷ Aetheria (Silvia), CSEL, 39, 72; Bordeaux Pilgrim, T. Tobler, *op. cit.*, 18.

²⁰⁸ *Spelunca salvatoris . . . sepulcrum Domini*: the Letter of Paula and Eustochium to Marcella, T. Tobler, *loc. cit.*, p. 46; *sepulcrum resurrectionis*: Jerome, *Peregrinatio sanctae Paulae*, *ibid.*, p. 32.

²⁰⁹ I give a translation from the French of F. Macler, *Hist. d'Héraclius par l'évêque Sebêos* (Paris, 1904), p. 71.

²¹⁰ Paris, 1860, p. 420. See also R. Nisbet Bain, *Palestine Explor. Fund., Quarterly Statement*, 1896, 347, who bases his translation on the Russian translation of Patkanov. A more recent edition of the Armenian text was published in Tiflis in 1912.

²¹¹ O. Bardenhewer, *Gesch. der altkirchlichen Literatur*, V (Freiburg im Br., 1932), 54.

²¹² MPG 94, 1245B.

²¹³ Or again in Oratio III, 34, *ibid.*, 1353B.

τῆς ἡμῶν ἀθανασίας, ὁ τάφος; “the sepulcher of life” (ὁ τῆς ζωῆς τάφος).²¹⁴ It would be easy to add numerous examples of this usage from later Greek texts. These and similar epithets became almost stock phrases of all writers referring to the Holy Sepulcher.²¹⁵ But one of the most interesting of the Armenian texts is that which appears in the Synaxary of “Ter Israel” for 13 September²¹⁶ under the heading: “On this day is the Feast of the Church of the Holy Resurrection at Jerusalem (in which is found the tomb which received God), of Holy Golgotha, and other sites of the life-giving Passion, and of Holy Sion.” We are told that when the building was completed “they anointed and blessed, by magnificent feasts of consecration, the Church of the Holy Resurrection and the chapel, still more sacred, of the tomb of Christ which contained life.”²¹⁷

Throughout the lengthy description of the origin of the Feast of Consecration runs the theme that the tomb of Christ is in Paradise, a new Eden, or simply “the garden.” For example, after having discovered the true Cross, the Empress, “descending from Holy Golgotha arrived at the site of the garden where was found the holy tomb carved out of rock.” Or again, “He [Constantine] has rendered this place resplendent with countless benefactions, and true delights, surpassing those which filled the first abode, the Paradise of Eden, for there [Eden], having sinned, we found death and were condemned, while here [the new Eden?], having been exculpated, we were saved and given life.”

At least as early as the fifth century the Cross had been accorded the epithet “life-giving”²¹⁸ and surely by the seventh century the term τὸ ξύλον ζωῆς (which should be translated “tree of life,” not “wood of life”)²¹⁹ had come to be applied to the cross, as evidenced by the inscriptions that

²¹⁴ *Quaest. 107 ad Amphiloc.*, in the text as given by Chrys. Papadopoulos, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας Ἱεροσολύμων* (Jerusalem and Alexandria, 1910), p. 339, and in Vincent, Abel, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

²¹⁵ For example the Typicon of the Church of Jerusalem, Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Analecta* II, 1 ff. contains this phrase: οἱ δὲ διάκονοι (ἵστανται) ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ ζωηφόρου τάφου. (“and the deacons halt before the life-bearing tomb.”)

²¹⁶ *Patrologia Orientalis*, VI, fasc. 2, 212 ff.

²¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 215. That is, the space enclosed within the *tegurium* around the rock-hewn tomb, is termed the “chapel of the tomb of Christ.” Earlier we have this interpretation made amply clear: “The Empress constructed a great temple [the round Church of the Anastasis] and an elegant Chapel adorned with gold upon the sacred spot of the resurrection of our Saviour.”

²¹⁸ Marcus Diaconus, *Vita Porphyrii Gazensis*, as quoted by Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, p. 215: τὸν τίμιον καὶ ζωοποιὸν σταυρόν (edd. Societatis philologiae bonnensis sodales, Leipzig, 1895, 14, line 6).

²¹⁹ As is sometimes done. The Greek texts of the creation, referring to both the trees of life and of knowledge of good and evil use the word ξύλον. It was the usage in Genesis, as we shall see, that was the compelling authority for Christian writers when referring to the Cross as the “tree of life.”

appear so frequently around the borders of the Monza and Bobbio ampullae.²²⁰ But there is also at least one souvenir from the Holy Sites in Jerusalem, and generally regarded as of approximately the same period as the ampullae, in which the tomb itself is called "life-giving." The reliquary box in the Museo Cristiano of the Vatican, which was part of the treasure from the Sancta Sanctorum,²²¹ was found to contain fragments of the Holy Places in Jerusalem (small stones, pieces of cloth and of wood) set in a paste in the box. Some of these fragments were labeled. One label reads: ΑΠ ΖΩΟΠΟΙΟΥΤ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΕΩΣ, "from the [place of?] life-giving resurrection." Since the other inscriptions indicate relics taken from the Churches of the Eleona, Nativity at Bethlehem, and Sion, none of which is characterized on its label as ζωοποιόν, the inference is that the relic from the Ἀναστάσεως is from the sepulcher itself.²²²

We have thus, on evidence of texts, the frequent use, after the beginning of the seventh century, of various epithets having to do with the idea that the Holy Sepulcher is bearer, container, giver, tomb, source, or fountain of life. The question arises, how would an artist render this idea should he desire to show the sepulcher as the source of life, or any and all of these aspects of the tomb? For answer we may turn to the methods employed in an iconography of the life-giving Cross.

There were two principal methods whereby the Cross was depicted as τὸ ξύλον ζωοποιόν. The first is that which Henri Stern has discussed in his treatment of the iconography of the Cross on the north wall of the nave in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem²²³ (Fig. 46). This gemmed cross with round knobs (rosettes, or perhaps pomegranates symbolizing celestial

²²⁰ Garrucci, *op. cit.*, pl. 433, fig. 9; pl. 434, figs. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8; pl. 435, fig. 1. For the Bobbio phials, see G. Celi, *op. cit.*, p. 125, fig. 8; p. 136, fig. 13; C. Cecchelli, "Note iconografiche su alcune ampolle Bobbiesi," *Riv. di archeol. crist.*, IV (1927), 117, fig. 1. The usual formula is Ἐλαίου ξύλου ζωῆς τῶν ἁγίων τοῦ ΧΥ τόπων: "Oil of the tree of life and of the holy places of Christ."

²²¹ H. Grisar, *Die römische Kapelle Sancta Sanctorum und ihr Schatz* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1908), pp. 113–117; Ph. Lauer, in *Fondation Piot, Monuments et Mémoires*, XV (1906), 97–99 and pl. XIV, 2; C. R. Morey, "The Painted Panel from the Sancta Sanctorum," *Festschrift Paul Clemen* (1926), pp. 151–167.

²²² Morey, *op. cit.*, p. 151, reports that it was the unanimous opinion of Monsignor Mercati, Pio Franchif de' Cavalieri, and Professor Mercati, that the script of these labels is considerably earlier than an "uncial of the ninth century" as Lauer, *loc. cit.*, considered. They believed it "earlier than the eighth," and thought it "might date as early as the sixth." On the other hand, the use of ΑΠ suggests a considerably later date.

²²³ "Les Représentations des conciles dans l'église de la Nativité à Bethléem," *Byzantion*, XI (1936), 141–152. He dates the series in the seventh or eighth century. For illustrations, see *The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem* (Byzantine Research Fund, ed. R. Weir Schultz, London, 1910), p. 34, fig. 24; de Vogüé, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1860), pl. IV and fig. p. 49; Giov. Ciampini, *De sacris aedificiis a Constantino magno constructis* (Rome, 1693), pl. XXXIII.

nourishment?) at the tip end of each of the arms, is flanked by two trees. Stern has identified this type of cross as "life-giving" largely because of its general relation to the cross on the sixth- or seventh-century ampulla No. 5 from Bobbio (Fig. 49), whose border inscription employs the phrase *ἐλαιον ξύλον ζωῆς*.²²⁴ This latter has the knobs at the extremities of the arms, but lacks the trees. In addition, however, it is surrounded by a star-studded mandorla, and is adored by four angels. These features indicate that the "life-giving" cross has a setting in Paradise. An example that combines features of the Bethlehem cross with others of Bobbio No. 5, is the cross on the reverse side of the central panel of the ivory triptych of Harbaville (Fig. 48).²²⁵ Here a rather severely plain cross is tipped by rosettes and flanked by two cypress trees which bend gracefully inward to touch the center of the cross. Profuse shrubs, vines, and flowers, interspersed with small animals, spring up from the ground at the foot of the cross, and grape vines spiral upward around the cypresses. The background is studded with stars and contains the inscription IC XC NIKA. Thus, although the Bobbio example lacks the trees, yet it shares with Harbaville the stars and the knobs at the ends of the arms.

Stern is quite right in identifying these as examples of the general type of "life-giving" cross, but not necessarily because of the inscription around the border of Bobbio No. 5. The ampullae sometimes use inscriptions containing the phrase *ἐλαιον ξύλον ζωῆς* around scenes with which it has no significance; for example, surrounding scenes of the Adoration of the Magi.²²⁶

But it is really not necessary to refer to any of these examples to ascertain that the cross flanked by trees is indeed the life-giving cross. The proof that such a cross is to be conceived as being in Paradise, and life-giving, can be derived from a combination of textual and pictorial sources.

The Synaxary of "Ter Israel" on the origins of the Feast of Consecration

²²⁴ See Celi, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

²²⁵ Paris, Louvre, generally dated eleventh century. The triptych as a whole bears close relationship to those of the Museo Sacro of the Vatican, and the Museo di Palazzo Venezia, Rome. For a discussion of these three and further bibliography, see C. R. Morey, *Gli oggetti di avorio e di osso del Museo Sacro Vaticano*, Catalogo del Museo Sacro, vol. 1 (Vatican City, 1936), p. 22 f. In addition to crosses of the type mentioned by Stern, can be added the two full page illuminations of the gemmed crosses with lozenges at the tips of the arms and two great acanthus leaves issuing from the foot presented on folios B^v and C of Ms. Gr. 510 of the Bibl. Nat. (H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs*, Paris, 1929, pls. 17, 18) painted for the Emperor Basil I. These examples have the same inscriptions as Harbaville. Another, of the same type, with rosettes at the tips, stars in the background and again two great acanthus leaves, is found on the embossed silver-gilt panel of the eleventh century, in the Louvre (O. M. Dalton, *Byz. Art and Archaeology*, Oxford, 1911, fig. 343, p. 559).

²²⁶ Garrucci, *op. cit.*, pls. 433, 9; 434, 1.

of the Great Church of the Holy Resurrection, which we have just quoted, makes the point that the new Paradise (the sites of our Lord's Passion at Jerusalem) was provided with more "true delights" than "the first abode, the Paradise of Eden" because in the latter "we found death" while in the new Eden "we were saved and given life." Now death came to us in Eden through the tree of knowledge of good and evil, of whose fruit the first man was forbidden to eat, while life everlasting was attained for man through the tree (the Cross) set in the midst of the new Eden at Jerusalem. John of Damascus makes this point clear when he says, "The tree of life that was planted by God in Paradise [i.e. Eden] foreshadowed this precious Cross [of Christ]. For since death came through a tree [i.e. the tree of knowledge of good and evil in Eden] it was necessary that life and resurrection be given through a tree [i.e. the Cross of Christ]." ²²⁷

The picture *par excellence* illustrating this contrast between the old and the new Edens, between the tree in the Garden that brought death, and the tree (Cross) of Golgotha that brought life (foreshadowed by the tree of life in Eden), is the miniature on folio 30 of one of the illustrated Greek manuscripts of the Legend of Barlaam and Joasaph, Parisinus Gr. 1128 ²²⁸ (Fig. 45). The miniature is an illustration to that part of the text in which Barlaam instructs the young prince in the story of the Creation, specifically the command given Adam forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is placed immediately after the words: ἡ δ' αὖν ἡμέρα φάγησθε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, θανάτῳ ἀποθανείσθε (Gen. 2:17: "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die"). The miniature consists of a traditional Octateuch illustration of the speaking hand of God addressing Adam in the Garden, warning him of the consequences of eating of the fruit of the tree — death. Between Eve (left) and Adam are two trees (of knowledge and life?), the one to the right sharply pointed (cypress?). But, unlike the typical Octateuch version of this scene, the hand of God issues, not from the arc of heaven, but from a rectangle to the right in which a cross is hieratically flanked by two sharply pointed trees (cypress?) entirely like those of the Harbaville triptych (Fig. 48) and the one beside Adam. There can be no doubt that the artist was engaged in contrasting the "first abode" in which "we found death" and the new Paradise in which "we were saved and given life" — the tree of knowledge of good and evil, through which death came, and the tree of life, found both in the Paradise

²²⁷ *De Fide Orthodoxa*, IV, 11, MPG 94, 1132C: Τοῦτον τὸν τίμον στανρὸν προετύπωσε τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς, τὸ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ ὑπὸ Θεοῦ πεφυτευμένον. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ διὰ ξύλου ὁ θάνατος, ἔδει διὰ ξύλου δωρηθῆναι τὴν ζωὴν καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν.

²²⁸ Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *L'Illustration du roman de Barlaam et Joasaph* (Paris, 1937), Album, pl. LVI, fig. 218, discussed in Text, p. 115 f.

of Eden and that Paradise which Eden foreshadowed. The Cross, tree of life, thus acquires two cypresses as attributes of its life-giving qualities.

According to the scriptures there are two trees of life: that which God planted "in the midst of the garden" (Gen. 2:9), and that "which is in the Paradise of God" (Apoc. 2:7). In Apocalypse 22:2 there are described two trees of life, one on either side of the river, which however are spoken of as one tree, "And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit every month . . ." It is this dual aspect of the tree of life that is recorded in the two trees flanking the cross in our representations of the life-giving Cross.

The second, and perhaps better known method of indicating the Cross as the tree of life, in Paradise, is that which renders the Cross itself in terms of living tree trunks, usually trunks of the palm tree.²²⁹ It is employed in several of the ampullae, but best illustrated in Bobbio No. 5 (Fig. 49).²³⁰ The setting, as noted above, is Paradise; but the detail to note in these examples is that while the trees are lacking, the cross itself is indicated as a living tree, made of the trunk of the date palm,²³¹ a tree frequently associated with the cross in representations of symbolic crucifixions, where perhaps it serves to indicate a setting in Paradise.²³²

These very methods of rendering the cross of life were also applied to representations of the Holy Sepulcher; and they could only have been applied to the latter in order to indicate that the Sepulcher too was life-giving. If one looks closely at a photographic reproduction of one of the Monza ampullae²³³ (Fig. 50) one sees that the columns of the *tegurium* of

²²⁹ There is no need here to go into details of this rather well known iconography of the Cross as the tree of life. For a general discussion of this usage, especially for the cross made of the trunks of date-palm trees, see W. L. Hildburgh, "On Palm-tree Crosses," *Archaeologia*, Second Series, LXXXI (1931), 49-61.

²³⁰ In addition, see Bobbio No. 3, in Celi, *op. cit.*, 74, vol. 2 (1923), p. 510; No. 11, vol. 3, p. 134; No. 10 A, *ibid.*, 135; Monza ampulla illustrated in Garrucci, *op. cit.*, pl. 434, fig. 2. Hildburgh, *op. cit.*, 50 and note 2, denies that any of the ampullae crosses represents a palm trunk largely because the residual fragments of the dead fronds do not all point in the same direction throughout the two halves of each of the two trunks which make up the cross. On this, see *infra*, notes 231, 235.

²³¹ Celi, *op. cit.*, p. 124, thinks the cross is "flowering and gemmed" (*florita e gemmata*). But the resemblance of the treatment of Bobbio No. 5 to the conventional manner of rendering the trunk of a date-palm tree is striking. For example, see the front of the Rinaldo sarcophagus at Ravenna (M. Lawrence, *The Sarcophagi of Ravenna*, fig. 1); the back of the Isaac sarcophagus of the Museo Nazionale, Ravenna (*ibid.*, fig. 13); or best of all, the front of the sarcophagus in the same museum illustrated by Lawrence in her fig. 35, where the trunk tapers in exactly the same way as the individual arms of the Bobbio cross.

²³² Lawrence, *op. cit.*, p. 43. The trees also occur in historic representations of the Crucifixion.

²³³ Reproduced in Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, p. 205, fig. 118 (right); A. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche* (Leipzig, 1908), vol. 1, pl. VIII, fig. 3.

the sepulcher are not architectural members at all (as Garrucci drew them),²³⁴ but are represented as living tree trunks — palm-tree trunks. There are no capitals or molded bases. Instead, the persisting bases of the dead fronds, which give the date-palm trunk its characteristic scaly effect, are carefully indicated in exactly the same manner that they are upon the date palms in several of the Ravenna sarcophagi.²³⁵ The Holy Sepulcher thus lends itself in art to the same symbolic characterization which we have found applied to it in the texts, and which we have found to be applied pictorially to the Cross. The Sepulcher, at least in this instance, is not a mere recording of the appearance of the historic monument (it depicts only four columns), but a representation of what it symbolized to the Faithful: ἡ φερέσβιος πέτρα καὶ ζωηφόρος. But there is evidence that the other method of indicating this quality, that of the use of flanking trees, as in the representations of τὸ ζύλον ζωοποιόν, was also applied pictorially to the Holy Sepulcher. The painted panel which formed the cover to the above-mentioned box from the Sancta Sanctorum containing a fragment labeled “from the place of life-giving resurrection” has painted upon its outer surface the Cross upon the hillock of Golgotha. The cross is contained within a mandorla and is crossed by two staves. In the two upper corners is the inscription IC XC, and in the two lower, A and Ω.²³⁶ This is a life-giving cross with some of the details of others of the type. On the under side of the cover is a series of five scenes: the Crucifixion across the central zone, the Resurrection and Ascension above, and the Nativity and Baptism below — scenes commemorating the central events of Christ’s life around which so much of the Christian dogma of Salvation and the doctrine of the Sacraments revolve. As in the ampullae, therefore, we can expect to find here not merely historical painting but a symbolizing of those doctrines. The places where these events occurred were the great Holy Sites from which came the relics within the box itself.

But the scene which is of interest to us is that of the Resurrection (Fig. 47). In addition to the fact that it gives us one of the best representations of the Holy Sepulcher, entirely within the pictorial tradition of the Monza and Bobbio ampullae, the scene is of particular concern here because of the introduction of the two flanking trees which, in the case of the cross, sym-

²³⁴ *Op. cit.*, pl. 435, fig. 1.

²³⁵ It is to be noted that the shafts of the tree trunks are rough and scaly, as are the shafts of the palm trunk, while at the top, in lieu of capitals, the remnants of the old palm-fronds point upward (again characteristic of the shaft of the date-palm trunk) while the bottoms of the shafts, in place of bases, have similar remnants of old leaves pointing downward.

²³⁶ Grisar, *op. cit.*, p. 116, fig. 60.

bolized Paradise and the trees of life.²³⁷ Now if we grant that Sepulcher and Cross in the ampullae are not mere historical representations, but theologically symbolic, we must do so also in the case of the panel which is the painted version of the little reliefs on the ampullae. Therefore the sepulcher and two trees can be regarded as being just as symbolic as the palm-trunk *tegurium* of the ampulla or the cross on the Harbaville Triptych.

To turn now to the Armenian tholoi. It seems certain that the appearance, so regularly as to be the rule, of the two trees (cypresses?), one on either side of the sepulcher, can be correctly construed as signifying that thereby the sepulcher is "life-giving." Even the profusion of vegetal growth upon the conical roofs of the Armenian and Georgian illustrations of the sepulcher as a symbolic source of life, makes its contribution to this end, and has its parallel in other monuments. Attention was called to the plant life springing up at the foot of the "cross of life" on the Harbaville Triptych (Fig. 48). Plant life is likewise shown growing upon the conical roof of the sepulcher in one of the Monza phials representing the scene of the Holy Women at the Tomb²³⁸ (Fig. 51). This detail, which thus serves as an added indication that the sepulcher in art, as in literature, was regarded as life-giving, serves to establish still more firmly the close relationship between the so-called "tempietto" and the representations of the *tegurium* of the Holy Sepulcher as depicted upon the Palestinian ampullae. A detail in the most recently known Armenian tholos lends support to our interpretation of the symbolism of the two trees. In the miniature of the Jerusalem Gospels, No. 2562 (Fig. 34),^{238a} the trees are rendered as highly schematized cones with a chevron pattern. As if to emphasize the relation between the tree of life in Eden and the Cross that it foreshadowed (as John of Damascus put it), the Armenian miniaturist has crowned each of his trees with a great cross.

²³⁷ Our newly obtained photograph, reproduced as Fig. 47, brings out this and other details of the picture more clearly than previously published reproductions. Lauer, *op. cit.*, p. 99, had already made note of the trees, "Dans le registre supérieur, à gauche, un pin parasol, sur un rocher, domine le Saint-Sépulchre. . ."

²³⁸ Garrucci, *op. cit.*, pl. 434, fig. 1, best illustrated, however, in the photograph reproduced by A. Heisenberg, *op. cit.*, pl. IX, fig. 5, from which our illustration is taken. The plants on the conical roofs of these representations of the Holy Sepulcher are comparable to the trees planted upon the cone-shaped tumuli of certain ancient Etruscan and Roman mausolea, such as the Mausoleum of Augustus. It is interesting to note, in this respect, the densely planted cypress trees upon the roof of the *tegurium* of the Erivan fragment (Fig. 38).

^{238a} See above, note 192a. This unpublished Ms. has Canon Tables on folios 1r-2v; the tholos is on folio 3r; the four Evangelists stand in a row beneath a single arch on folio 3v. The style of these figures suggests an 11th century date for the Ms. because the closest stylistic parallel is found in the four standing Evangelists of the Gospels No. 1924 of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem, dated by a colophon in the year 1064.

There are examples of the Fountain of Life in two other manuscripts of the Gospels, both of them Ethiopic, that should now be examined. Late and crude though they are, they will be found to be of exceptional importance to this study in various ways. The first of these (Fig. 53), is on folio 7^r of the Gospels written for King Sayfa Ar'âd (1344–1372).²³⁹ The second (Fig. 54), is on folio 6^r of the Gospels written in 1401 for Zir Gânêlâ, daughter of Sayfa Ar'âd.²⁴⁰ It is something of a question whether these are examples of the *fons vitae* in the Carolingian sense, or whether they should rather be grouped with the Armenian tholoi, for they share features with both groups and can thus be said to be confections of the two traditions. Like most of the tholoi each has the flanking trees and knotted curtains. With the Carolingian *fons vitae*, however, they share the two animals whose identity, though uncertain in the inscriptions that accompany them in both pictures,²⁴¹ is nevertheless cleared up in the second of the two Ethiopic versions by the fact that long antlers are attached to the heads of the creatures. They must have been thought of as stags or harts and not lambs as they might otherwise seem to be. With the Carolingian *fons vitae* the Ethiopic versions also share the two large birds on either side of the pointed roof, which more nearly resemble the peacocks of Godescalc and Soissons than the birds found in the Armenian examples;²⁴² and finally, in the Gospels of Zir Gânêlâ, some kind of low barrier between the columns.²⁴³ The barrier is indicated by means of vertical and horizontal crosshatched lines, and in that fact recalls the crosshatching of the grilles in the Adysh Gospels. Were it not for the presence of the two animals which must be reminiscences of

²³⁹ Paris, Bibl. Nat., ethiop. 32, so far as the writer knows, heretofore published only in a drawing in W. Stasoff, *L'Ornement slave et oriental* (St. Petersburg, 1887), pl. 138, no. 1, where there is no indication that the architecture enclosed an inscription. This manuscript has the following arrangement in its accessories: 2^r–3^r, the letter of Eusebius to Carpianus; 3^v–6^v, Canon Tables; 7^r Fountain of Life; 7^v Crucifixion; 8^r Resurrection (Holy Women at the Sepulcher); 8^v Ascension. Portraits of the Evangelists, at the beginning of each Gospel, appear on folios 11^v, 68^v, 104^v, 162^v. Cf. Ugo Monneret de Villard, "Note sulle più antiche miniature abissine," *Orientalia, commentarii periodici pontifici instituti biblici*, VIII (new ser.), fasc. 1 and 2 (1939), 1–24.

²⁴⁰ Now in the collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, M.828, where it has been refoiled. Formerly in the possession of Gregor Aharon. First published by C. Nordenfalk, *op. cit.*, Pl. 38. Immediately after the *fons vitae* is a series of nineteen illustrations forming a cycle of the life of Christ beginning with the Annunciation (fol. 6^v) and ending with the Ascension (fol. 15^v). Cf. H. A. Bull, Jr., "The Gospel According to the Abyssinians," *International Studio*, May 1929, p. 31 ff.

²⁴¹ The animal cannot be identified by means of the inscription above it which reads *bā bū bā*. Dr. Gehman (see note 252) informs me that the Amharic *bā* or *bā bū* plus *alê* means "to bleat," and therefore infers that the term is onomatopoeic and could apply to a lamb or sheep.

²⁴² The inscriptions above the birds read *s'gana bāḥr* which Dr. Gehman renders "Ostrich of the sea" or "of the lake."

²⁴³ In the earlier Ethiopic example there is also some kind of filling between the column bases. On it is painted a cross.

the harts retained in the Carolingian examples, we would be more than justified in attributing to this Ethiopic structure a meaning similar to that of the Adysh tholos, and thus infer that reference is made to the Holy Sepulcher. As it is, we can only assume that a merging of two traditions is responsible for the representation of the animals and the grilles.

But that conflation was probably present also in the earliest example of all — Godescalc. There can be no doubt in the latter case that the structure is used in a context of baptism, but, curiously enough, the walls of what we can only regard as the container for water are diagonally crosshatched. This fact is of some importance in that it indicates that the sepulchral tradition of Adysh existed at an earlier date than that of the Adysh Gospels (897), and can be inferred to have been available even to the West in the eighth century if not before.²⁴⁴

But how can these reminiscences of the tomb of the resurrection be reconciled with the baptismal-font tradition of the West? And how could each have been regarded as appropriate to a set of Canon Tables (concordances of the four Gospels) in the manuscripts in which they appear? The answer to these questions is implied in distich (f) of the Lateran inscriptions (*supra*, p. 55) where the Fountain of Life (the font of baptism) is said to “take its course” or issue from the “wound of Christ.” But the elaboration of this idea, and a very precise answer to our questions, is given in one of the chants sung in the center of the atrium of the Holy Sepulcher, the atrium which was known as the “garden,” “Paradise,” or “new Eden,”²⁴⁵ where stood the *omphalos*, center of the world where God worked “salvation in the midst of the earth” (Ps. 74:12).²⁴⁶ This chant, sung on Good

²⁴⁴ One might be tempted to think that the model of the Soissons version had crosshatching and thus account for the two groups of parallel diagonal lines that slope down from right to left on the front side of the hexagonal *piscina*. Did the Soissons painter know the Godescalc example or another similar to it, and after starting to imitate it did he desist from the completion of the crosshatchings perhaps owing to a knowledge of what they signified? Or, did the Soissons model *not* indicate crosshatchings, and did the painter, perhaps from another model that did, having started to combine the two versions, change his mind and decide to omit them? These are speculations that cannot be resolved.

²⁴⁵ The chant quoted below may possibly have had this last connotation. The *Typicon* of Jerusalem calls the atrium ὁ Ἅγιος Κήπος. See Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, 238, I, 4; 240, IV, 2; 242, V, 5. It probably acquired this name from the statement of John 19:41 where it is said that the tomb of Christ was in a garden. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* XIV, 5, MPG 33, 829, intimates that the atrium was the “garden.” The pilgrim Wilibald (T. Tobler, *op. cit.*, I, pt. 2, p. 263) says: “Et ibi secus est ille hortus in quo erat sepulcrum Salvatoris.” The monk Bernard, on the other hand, says: “Inter predictas igitur IV ecclesias est paradus sine tecto” (*ibid.*, 315). As we have seen, *supra*, p. 97, the Synaxary of “Ter Israel” calls the place where the tomb was “the garden,” and by implication regards it as Paradise.

²⁴⁶ Origen, *Selecta in Psalmos*, MPG 12, 1532, suggests that Ps. 73 (74):12 forecasts Christ’s burial for three days at the center of the earth. By the middle of the fourth century the idea was firmly established that one part or the other of the Holy Sites at Jerusalem marked

Friday, the day when Christ received the wound, is recorded in the *Typicon* of Jerusalem as follows:²⁴⁷

And Thy life-giving side, like a fountain bubbling forth from Eden,
Waters Thy Church, O Christ, like a reasonable Paradise,
Thence dividing into sources, into Four Gospels,
Watering the universe, purifying creation,
And teaching the nations faithfully to worship Thy Kingdom.

The body of Christ is here the life-giving fountain which flows forth from Eden (typified perhaps by the Holy Sites at Jerusalem) to water the Church. The water is the water of baptism which issued from the pierced side of Christ, together with His blood (John 19:34; I John 5:6). In Paulinus' *titulus* and mosaic, the rock of the Church gives issue to "four sonorous springs, the Evangelists"; in the chant from the *Typicon*, the Fountain of Life (the wound of Christ) takes the place of the Church as the source, and from it issue the four streams of the Gospels. It is now readily understood how the columnar *tegurium* of the Holy Sepulcher could be employed as the Fountain of Life, symbol of the dead body of Christ; how it could be construed (as we found that it was) as symbol also of Ecclesia; and why it was so suitable, as a symbol of the source from which issued the four streams of the Gospels, that it should come to be introduced as an integral part of the set of Canon Tables in which their sonorous agreement is exhibited (see Appendix A, below). It is the four Gospels that reveal the mysteries of the sacraments and thus make verdant the Church of Christ — a Paradise — by means of the life-giving waters. The *fons vitae* of the Soissons Gospels, which we have seen had a function as an illustration of a part of the text of the *Plures fuisse* (*supra*, pp. 70 ff.), likewise served as a suitable frontispiece for the Canon Tables. This explains why that illumination seemed to be irregular, in that it was removed from a place of contiguity to the Prologue. Since it served a double illustrative purpose, of necessity

the place where the prophecy of the Psalmist was fulfilled. See Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, p. 188 for textual references. Pilgrim texts of the seventh century make it amply clear that by then a special monument marked the spot in the atrium that was the *omphalos* of the world (*ibid.*, p. 224 f.).

²⁴⁷ A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας* (Petrograd, 1894), II, 134:

Ἡ ζωφόρος σου πλευρὰ | ὡς ἐξ Ἑδὲμ πηγὴ ἀναβλύζουσα
τὴν ἐκκλησίαν σου, Χριστέ, | ὡς λογικὸν ποτίζει παράδεισον,
ἐντεῦθεν μερίζουσα | εἰς ἀρχάς, εἰς τέσσαρα εὐαγγέλια,
τὸν κόσμον ἀρδεύουσα, | τὴν κτίσιν φαιδρύνουσα
καὶ τὰ ἔθνη πιστῶς | διδάσκουσα προσκυνεῖν | τὴν βασιλείαν σου.

The manuscript used by Papadopoulos-Kerameus is dated 1122, but is a copy of a compilation of the liturgy of 940. *Ibid.*, p. 8'.

it had to be separated from one of its two contexts. However, the fact that it was chosen as a frontispiece for the Canon Tables indicates that the main function of the picture, and its traditions, relate it primarily to the Canon Tables and not to a Prologue.

Up to this point we have attempted to discover the various uses made of the related representations of the *fons vitae*—baptismal font in Carolingian and the tholos-sepulcher in Georgian and Armenian Gospels, as well as the apparent conflation of the two in Ethiopic Gospels. This has been done by recourse to the immediate contexts of each example or group, and without regard to any possible antecedents in Christian art earlier than the eighth and ninth centuries. But there are two facts that merit consideration in a reconstruction of the historical development of these pictures as integral parts of books of the Gospels. One is the strength of the tradition, just mentioned, which almost invariably placed the Fountain of Life (henceforth we shall include both traditions under this title) in the closest relation to the Canon Tables, and the other is the conspicuous absence of the Fountain of Life as a reminiscence of the font of baptism or the sepulcher of the resurrection in Greek manuscripts.

As has been noted in passing, all these small circular structures or tholoi, with the sole exception of Godescalc, appear in the same general context, the oriental ones as tailpieces to the Canon Tables, that of the Soissons Gospels as a frontispiece. However, when we look about for a possible counterpart in Greek Gospel books that contain sets of Canon Tables we find a few examples of tholoi that bear a striking relation in form and context to our Fountains of Life, although they are totally lacking in the iconographic significations we have found in the latter. The most important of these, both because of the quality of its rendition and because it appears in a Book of the Gospels of probable Constantinopolitan provenience, is the tholos structure on folio 3^r of Cod. gr. I, 8 of the Marciana Library, Venice ²⁴⁸ (Fig. 55).

Like the *fons vitae* of the Soissons Gospels, the Marciana structure stands alone on its page as a frontispiece to the Canon Tables. In its form it is clearly related to our other examples in that it too is obviously derived from late antique representations of tholoi. That is to say, the cornice bearing the conical roof is represented in the usual manner of tholoi as an upward sweeping curve indicative of its roundness when seen from below.

²⁴⁸ K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des IX. und X. Jahrh.*, fig. 92 and p. 15 f.

(Compare, for example, the typical Pompeian tholoi.)²⁴⁹ Another example in a Greek book of the Gospels is that which occupies the whole of folio 13^v of Vatican, Cod. gr. 354.²⁵⁰ This very debased example, dating from the middle of the tenth century in a manuscript which is clearly “Byzantino-Islamic” in origin, appears as a tailpiece to the Canon Tables.

These Greek canopies, however, seem to have no iconographic significance, and in that they differ from our other groups. Their function appears to be solely that of enclosing or enframing an inscription. Contained within the central intercolumniation are the words: ὑπόθεσις κανόνος τῆς τῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν συμφωνίας. The function of the canopy is thus to enframe a title which identifies the subject matter (ὑπόθεσις) of the pages that follow it, i.e. “of the table (κανών)²⁵¹ of the concord, or harmony (συμφωνία) of the Evangelists.”

If it could be shown that this title was given to the set of Canon Tables at or about the time of their composition in the middle of the fourth century, and that such a title was enframed at an early date within an architectural canopy of the tholos type, then we should be warranted in holding the belief that the *fons vitae* and the “tempietto” were derived from the enframed Hypothesis inscription. Should this be true, we could account for the continued appearance of the tholos as *fons vitae*, in both Eastern and Western senses, within the framework of the Canon Tables. For surely the Hypothesis and its tholos was more rigidly tied to the Canon Tables than was the Fountain of Life, containing as it does many implications in addition to that of the harmony of the Evangelists. Moreover, the statement of the Hypothesis, in its very nature, required that it appear either as an *incipit* or as an *explicit* to the Tables, and on a purely logical basis the Hypothesis with its inscribed statement of concordance would seem to be the antecedent of the elaborate and varied symbolical development of the Fountain of Life. The latter could thus be regarded as having retained not only the form of the tholos from the Hypothesis but also its position in the Canon Tables. Indeed the varied forms of the Fountain of Life might be viewed as the result of a desire not only to depict the harmony in symbolical terms rather than to state it, but also to elaborate the theme and even to add new implications.

²⁴⁹ H. G. Beyen, *Die pompejanische Wanddekoration* (The Hague, 1938), I, Plates, figs. 23, 28, 56–58, *passim*.

²⁵⁰ K. Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, fig. 513.

²⁵¹ See G. Kittel, *Theol. Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testaments*, III, 602, h, for evidences of the use of κανών as a technical term for *list* or *table* such as was used in astrological and mathematical treatises or as the listing of events in a chronicle. The second part of the Chronicle of Eusebius, which exists in the form of tables, bears the title χρονικοὶ κανόνες. Cf. *Griechische christl. Schriftsteller*, V, 5 (ed. Karst), p. xxxiii and 156 ff.

It should now be pointed out that two of our examples of the *fons vitae*, the latest and certainly the crudest, retain the Hypothesis inscription within and above their tholoi (Figs. 53, 54). The Fountain of Life in King Sayfa Ar'ād's Ethiopic Gospels has the following inscription in its central intercolumniation: "The Arrangement of the Canon which the Four Gospels have in common."²⁵² This is nothing more nor less than a rough translation into the Ethiopic of the Greek Hypothesis. Thus, not only do these examples serve to show the conflation of the *fons vitae* and the "tempietto," as we have already seen, but they also indicate the connection between the Greek tholos, with its Hypothesis, and the Fountain of Life.

Unfortunately, it is not known when or by whom the statement of the Hypothesis was composed, nor is it possible to ascribe a date for its inclusion within the tholos frame. The earliest example of the inscription known to me occurs on folio 5^r of the Codex Rossanensis,²⁵³ where, in that book's present foliation, it appears as a frontispiece to the Eusebian letter and not in a tholos but in a wreath (Fig. 57). The apparent difficulty of supporting the proposed sequence of Hypothesis in a tholos frame, followed by its elaboration into the varying forms of the Fountain of Life, is made greater too by the fact that extant examples of the former must be dated later than some of the Fountains of Life — certainly than those of the Carolingian manuscripts. There is also the prevalent opinion that the Marciana Gospels, our earliest example, derived its tholos and some of its decoration from Armenian models because of the rather slight similarity of motifs in the tholoi and Canon Table arches of the Marciana and Etchmiadzin Gospels. But it is far from certain that the borrowing operated in that direction. The ornamental motifs of Etchmiadzin, such as the overlapping shells in one arch of the Eusebian letter and the downward hanging acanthus leaves that decorate the frieze of the tholos, are exactly comparable to those of another Greek Gospel book, Vatican, Pal. gr. 220.²⁵⁴ This manuscript, though it lacks a tholos, preserves in a wreath an important element of the tholos as a substitute for the Hypothesis inscription, as we shall see, and the inscription

²⁵² I am much indebted to Dr. Henry S. Gehman for his generous aid in translating the inscriptions on this folio of the manuscript.

²⁵³ Probably of Cappadocian origin and dating in the early sixth century (A. M. Friend, "Portraits of the Evangelists," *Art Studies*, 5, 1927, 138). For facsimile publications see A. Haseloff, *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1898); A. Muñoz, *Il Codice Purpureo di Rossano* (Rome, 1907).

²⁵⁴ On the subject of the supposed dependence of Marciana, I, 8 (which he concedes to be of Constantinopolitan provenience) upon Armenian models reflected in the Etchmiadzin Gospels, see K. Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 15, 16; and for the similarities between the latter and Vatican, Pal. gr. 220, compare pl. IV, figs. 11 and 12 with pl. V, figs. 15 and 17 in K. Weitzmann, *Die armenische Buchmalerei des 10. und beginnenden 11. Jahrhunderts* (Bamberg, 1933).

itself appears elsewhere in the Canon Tables. If the direction of influence with regard to the ornament of Etchmiadzin came rather from Greek models, then the Armenian illuminator of the Canon Tables of the Etchmiadzin Gospels would have been acquainted with the Greek tradition of the Hypothesis and with its tholos frame, for they are preserved in the two Greek manuscripts with which it has the closest stylistic connections. The Armenians would seem to have rejected the statement of the Hypothesis, but preserved the tholos which they adapted to use as a Fountain of Life.

But one should not judge the relative antiquity of these motifs on the basis of the chronology of the extremely small number of examples that have survived. It is nevertheless possible that the tholos containing the Hypothesis inscription did give rise to the more elaborate Fountain of Life, and that the tholos as a frame for the Hypothesis was of at least equal antiquity with the wreath-enframed inscription. On the latter point there is suggestive evidence on the folio which serves as frontispiece to the letter of Eusebius and the Canon Tables in the famous Rabula Gospels (Florence, Bibl. Laurenziana, Plut. I.56, fol. 2^r) (Fig. 56) dated A.D. 586 and thus at least approaching the date of the still earlier Codex Rossanensis in which the Hypothesis was framed by a wreath.

The frontispiece of the letter in Rabula consists of two standing portraits of Eusebius of Caesarea and Ammonius of Alexandria (so inscribed) placed beneath an architectural canopy. While it is drawn here as though it were polygonal in plan, the little structure seems surely to have been adapted from a tholos closely comparable to our other tholoi, *fontes* and "tempietti." The telltale feature that betrays the tholos is the characteristic conical roof with its sweeping curves rising to a point.²⁵⁵ The other salient feature of the representations of tholoi, the great cornice curved upward as though seen from below, can be thought to have been sacrificed here in the process of adaptation to a canopy as cover for the two standing figures. In this process the number of columns has been reduced to three in order to provide the two wide intercolumniations for the figures, thus resulting in the unorthodox use of a column in the center. This requirement in turn has forced the adapter to use a polygonal cornice, and in order to prevent the obscuring of the conical roof the cornice has been shown as seen from above, hence the downward pointed angle made by the cornice in contrast to the upward curve of the typical tholos representation.

²⁵⁵ F. Robert, *Thymélè* (Paris, 1939), pp. 79–81 tends to agree with Servius (*ad Aen.* IX, 406) that this type of roof, or even the *scutum* or central acroterion, is the essential feature of the tholos.

What makes it possible to view this frontispiece as an adaptation of the tholos-enframed Hypothesis inscription, and thus suggest an antiquity of form approximating that of the wreath Hypothesis, is that this adaptation (if such it be) is used in Rabula in the same position as the wreath in the Rossanensis and that instead of presenting an inscribed title for the “symphonia” of Eusebius’ Canon Tables and its letter of explanation, the adapter has inserted the portraits of two great “harmonizers” of the Gospels, Eusebius (whose “symphonia” is presented in the following pages) and Ammonius (whose earlier endeavor along the same lines is briefly described in Eusebius’ letter).^{255a}

That these frames enclosing the Hypothesis inscription were subject to adaptation can be shown as well in the history of the wreath-enframed version. As was mentioned above, the earliest example of the wreath Hypothesis occurs on folio 5^r of the Codex Rossanensis (Fig. 57).²⁵⁶ In this instance the unity of the four Evangelists, stated in the inscription, is graphically demonstrated by the four medallion portraits of the Evangelists placed at the quadrants of the circle. These have been tied together, or interlaced, in a physical union by the gold borders of the wreath. Otherwise the wreath is little more than a frame, unelaborated by additional and possibly symbolic elements. In its straightforward simplicity and singleness of purpose it might be thought to represent the original form and function of the wreath Hypothesis as frontispiece to the letter of Eusebius and his Canon Tables. But the wreath in a Latin book of the Gospels, the so-called Livinius Gospels of Ghent (Fig. 59), while still retaining its function as a frame for an inscription has nevertheless been transformed into an *incipit* for each of the four Gospels and thus no longer takes its position with the Canon Tables. Here, of course, the original purpose — indication of the unity of the Gospels as one concordant whole — has been lost sight of. It has, however, retained the ribbon streamers (omitted in the Rossanensis) from the pagan sources of the wreath as frame for an inscription,²⁵⁷ which had been adapted to the wreath Hypothesis long before, as we shall see. The Livinius Gospels has been dated in the early ninth century,²⁵⁸ or about

^{255a} See Appendix A, below.

²⁵⁶ A. Muñoz, *op. cit.*, p. 2 and pl. IX.

²⁵⁷ These origins are briefly discussed in Köhler (see n. 258, below); F. Wickhoff, “Die Ornamente eines altchristl. Cod. der Hofbibl.,” *Jahrb. der kunsthistor. Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, XIV (1893), 209 ff. Cf. also the wreaths on pagan altars published by W. Altmann, *Die römischen Grabaltäre der Kaiserzeit* (Berlin, 1905), figs. 145–151.

²⁵⁸ W. Köhler, “Die Denkmäler der karolingischen Kunst in Belgien,” *Belgische Denkmäler . . . herausgegeben von Paul Clemen*, I (Munich, 1923), 12.

800.²⁵⁹ A passage taken from Theodulphus of Orleans provides a *terminus post quem* for this manuscript.²⁶⁰

In the frontispiece to the Canon Tables of the sixth-century fragment of a Greek book of the Gospels in Vienna,²⁶¹ Cod. 847 (Fig. 58) the original wreath-enframed Hypothesis has already achieved a transformation into what is obviously an elaborated symbolic form. This wreath, bordered by yellow bands in lieu of the golden ones of the Rossanensis, has omitted the medallion portraits and substituted rosettes. In place of the inscribed words of the Hypothesis is substituted a cross (yellow) which stands upon the base of an inverted triangle, the whole growing out of a ribbon bow tied at the bottom of the wreath. The triangle is formed by flat bands, the horizontal one being striped. From the bow two ribbon streamers descend and branch out horizontally to left and right in undulating curves. On these streamers stand two confronted peacocks and, near the extremities of the ribbons, two highly schematized flowering trees which repeat the form of the cross. Two similar trees are symmetrically disposed above the wreath.²⁶²

In two other Greek Gospel books somewhat simplified versions of this wreath appear in conjunction with Canon Tables: on folio 7^v of Lavra, Codex A. 23 (early ninth century) where it is used as frontispiece to the Canon Tables proper; and on folio 1^r of the Vatican Gospels, Pal. gr. 220 (as was mentioned above), where it serves as frontispiece to the letter of Eusebius.²⁶³ In the first of these (Fig. 60) the cross again stands on an inverted triangle formed by flat bands. The trees and birds have been eliminated. The Vatican wreath (Fig. 62), however, has two points of interest for us. First of all, an echo of its use in conjunction with the Hypothesis inscription is present in the fact that the first phrase of the Hypothesis, *ὑπόθεσις κανόνος*, is inscribed, on the verso of the page, in the tympanum of the arch which contains the first half of the letter for which the wreath serves as frontispiece (as happens in several other instances), and is written

²⁵⁹ Nordenfalk, *op. cit.*, p. 159, fig. 22.

²⁶⁰ The verses accompanying the Canon Tables, quoted by Köhler, *op. cit.*, p. 26, are lifted bodily (vss. 87–96) from the prologue of Theodulphus, Bishop of Orleans, composed for use in a codex of the Bible. Theodulphus, a contemporary of Charlemagne, died in A.D. 821. For the complete prologue see *Biblia sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem*, I (Rome, 1926), 52–60.

²⁶¹ H. J. Hermann, *Die frühmittelalterl. Hss. des Abendlandes*, v.1 of *Die illuminierten Hss. der Nationalbibl. in Wien* (Leipzig, 1923), pl. VII.

²⁶² A very similar wreath, with only minor variations, appears in the same codex (fol. 7^r) as a frontispiece to the Latin text of Rufinus of Aquileia, *De benedictionibus Patriarcharum*, with which it has nothing whatever to do.

²⁶³ Nordenfalk, *op. cit.*, p. 158, and figs. 20, 21; Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, pl. V, fig. 14.

out in full on one of the Canon Tables which follow.²⁶⁴ Secondly, the elements in the circle within the wreath, which can be viewed as having replaced the inscription, are not composed of flat bands and highly schematized leaves but assume a more sculptural or architectural quality. It should be noticed that the gemmed cross rests upon a disc in which radiating lines can be seen.²⁶⁵ The disc, in turn, rests upon an acanthus base somewhat resembling a capital. The acanthus leaves, as in the capitals, spread out to provide a base which in schematized contour would be an inverted triangle. In the Lavra and Vienna wreaths (Figs. 60, 58) the inverted triangle can thus be viewed as schematizations of a foliate form similar to the acanthus base of the Vatican wreath. Thus the scroll-like leaves at the two ends of the horizontal band in Lavra and in Vienna can be regarded as reminiscences of the diminutive volutes present in the Vatican wreath which, of course, ultimately derive from the Corinthian capital. The particular point of interest is that the central elements of the Vatican wreath almost exactly duplicate the crowning motif of the tholos in the Soissons Gospels and the Godescalc Lectionary. In Godescalc even the two small birds flanking the disc at the base of the cross are present. In the Soissons Gospels, the acanthus base for the cross and disc is particularly close to the Vatican motif and in its contours forms a very pronounced inverted triangle. (Compare Figs. 61, 62, and 63.)

In the Soissons Gospels and the Godescalc Lectionary the base motif upon which the cross and disc stand is a typical acroterion of a late antique tholos. Vitruvius,²⁶⁶ in theorizing about the proportions of its various elements, informs us that the roof of his typical tholos is terminated by two elements: the *pyramis* and the *flos*. The first of these can be identified in the Carolingian tholoi as the specially marked triangle at the point of the roof and the second as the acanthus acroterion which flares outward from the point to form an inverted triangle. The Christian adaptation of the Hellenistic tholos-acroterion has merely added the disc and the cross.

The evidence would seem to indicate, then, that not only did the wreath Hypothesis as frontispiece to the Canon Tables undergo adaptation and

²⁶⁴ For the opening phrase on the first page of the letter, see Nordenfalk, *op. cit.*, pl. 13. For the complete inscription of the Hypothesis on one of the Canon Tables of this manuscript, see Bibl. Apostolica Vaticana, *Codices palatini graeci* (Rome, 1885), p. 116. The Hypothesis is inscribed at the head of the letter in the following manuscripts of the National Library, Vienna: Suppl. gr. 50 (XI c., Gospels) fols. 5-6; Theol. gr. 154 (XI c., Gospels) fols. 2-3; Suppl. gr. 52 (XII c., New Testament) fol. 3. Cf. P. Buberl and H. Gerstinger, *Illuminierte Handschriften in Österreich*, Neue Folge, IV, pt. 2, pp. 16, 23, 54.

²⁶⁵ Very much like the cross on the disc incised on one of the column shafts in the Church of Saint John, Ephesus. See *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäol. Inst. in Wien*, XXV (1929), Beiblatt, 14, fig. 6.

²⁶⁶ IV, 8.

elaboration comparable to that suggested for the tholos Hypothesis, in the course of which both forms lost their inscriptions, but that in the process the wreath took over the crowning motif of the tholos and substituted it for the inscription. This conclusion leads to the equally important one that the tholos Hypothesis existed prior to the sixth century, the date of the Vienna wreath where the acroterion of the tholos has already been reduced to its simplest form.

If we now look back at the adapted tholos of the Rabula Gospels (Fig. 56) we find one interesting feature that might be regarded as having derived, as early as the sixth century, from the *fons vitae* itself. It was remarked above²⁶⁷ that the peacocks played such an important role in the broader meaning of the *fons vitae* that they must be regarded as essential elements of the Fountain of Life in the guise of a baptismal font, and they are present in all cases where the *fons* of this type was represented — in the two Carolingian and the two Ethiopic examples, but not in the “tempietti.” It is, therefore, perhaps significant that in the frontispiece of Rabula two peacocks are placed above the aedicula. They only differ from the Carolingian examples in that they are shown *en face* and with outspread tails; but in that respect they resemble the Ethiopic.

But quite apart from the somewhat tenuous evidence of Rabula, the textual evidence regarding the ideas underlying the iconography of the *fons vitae* would indicate that the way was prepared for it at least by the first half of the fifth century. If the evidence can be accepted that the tholos as frame for the Hypothesis was an antecedent to the *fons vitae* placed in a set of Canon Tables, then that earlier form would have to be pushed back to a period approaching the actual invention of the Canon Tables by Eusebius.

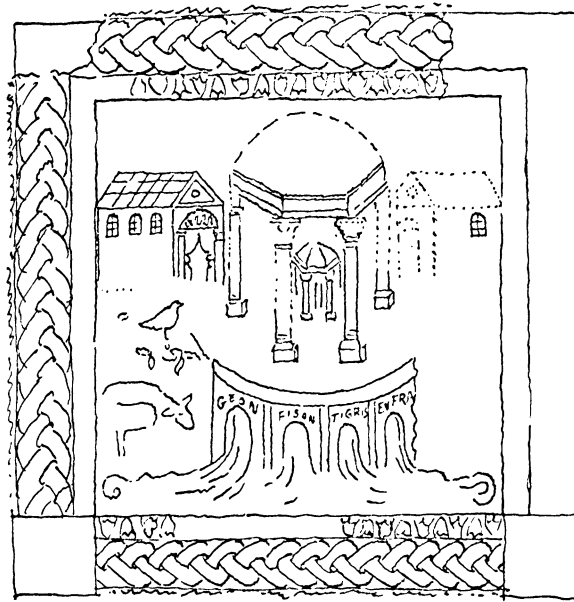
Some support for the conclusion that by the fifth century the *fons vitae* had entered the repertory of Christian art, at least as a free picture not attached to Canon Tables, is provided by the fifth-century mosaic pavement discovered in 1940 at Iunca in Tunisia.²⁶⁸ In this free version of the Fountain of Life, a polygonal monopteral structure,²⁶⁹ whose roof unfortunately has

²⁶⁷ Page 88.

²⁶⁸ G. L. Feuille, “L’Église de Junca,” *Rev. Tunisienne*, 1940. I wish to thank Professor Grabar for his courtesy in calling this mosaic to my attention and in generously allowing me to see the manuscript of his article entitled “Les plus anciennes images de la Fontaine de Vie,” sent to *Byzantina Metabyzantina* in 1946 and not yet published. I saw his article, written in May of 1946, in October of that year by which time I had written the first draft of this paper. Our articles, which come to very similar conclusions, were thus written independently.

²⁶⁹ Four columns are shown, but it is impossible to say whether the polygon was thought of as a hexagon or an octagon.

been so damaged as to make its form uncertain, stands upon a curved terrace or podium. The front of the terrace is divided by pilasters into four bays. The bays are occupied by four niches from which streams of water pour forth. The Latin names of the four rivers of Paradise are inscribed above the niches. The fragmentary mosaic still preserves, on the left, what



Mosaic pavement. Iunca, Tunisia (after G. L. Feuille)

seems to be one of two harts that were originally present. This version, of course, does not specifically represent a baptismal font, but, as we have seen, long before the fifth century the four rivers of Paradise (i.e. four Gospels) had been thought to issue from Ecclesia and so strongly connoted the “celestial inundation” bestowed by “the saving grace of baptism” (see above, p. 73), as Saint Cyprian, bishop of neighboring Carthage, had said, that even though no actual font is depicted in the Iunca mosaic, yet the underlying ideas of the picture would probably have been understood along the lines of Saint Cyprian’s interpretation.²⁷⁰

Thus, by the fifth century the theme of the Fountain of Life had not only been rendered in symbolic, pictorial terms, but all the ingredient ideas had been clearly formulated in literature, many of them at a much earlier time. Saint Cyprian, among others, had long since established the apposition

²⁷⁰ Grabar, in his article on the *fons vitae* (see n. 268, above) takes a somewhat different view of the meaning of the mosaic. He associates it with Apocalypse 22:1. “The throne of God and of the Lamb” is symbolized, according to him, by the altar-ciborium that is contained within the greater canopy. The larger structure he therefore takes to represent the Temple of the Heavenly Jerusalem. In my view it is hazardous to associate any specific scriptural passage with these representations.

of the four rivers and their source to Ecclesia and the four Evangelists and likened the "celestial inundation" to baptism. The numerological aspects had been developed long before the fifth century and summarized by Augustine, and in the course of that century, at the latest, the symbolism of the numbers six and eight had begun to be adopted in the architecture of some baptisteries and fonts. (Cf. the Milan inscription, *supra*, pp. 80 f.; and the evidence assembled in Appendix B.) Before the middle of the century the font of the Lateran, similar to the picture in its basic elements, had been given the significant appellation of *fons vitae* as evidenced in its inscribed distichs; and finally Leo had indicated the relation between the font and Ecclesia Genitrix on the one hand and the womb of the Virgin on the other.

We therefore might well imagine that by the fifth century also some aspects of the theme, especially those that emphasized the concordance of the Gospels in revealing the "good news" of the plan of salvation through the sacrifice of Christ commemorated in the Sacraments of Ecclesia, would have suggested themselves as suitable replacements for a bald statement of harmony enclosed within a tholos canopy which had stood either at the beginning or end of the Canon Tables in books of the four Gospels. Such a substitution and elaboration might have come with the introduction of the Canon Tables into Latin Vulgate Gospels, and thus account for its absence in Greek manuscripts which, on the contrary, remained faithful to Greek invention and continued to employ the Hypothesis as frontispiece, at times enframed in a tholos. It is even possible that Jerome's prologue (it is he who is credited with introducing the Canon Tables to the West) was the inspiring source that led Latin artists to make the adaptation for use in the Latin Gospels. In adding to the tholos of the inscription the element of water from the free version, the small columnar structure came to assume the form of a contemporary baptismal font. Yet back of this font was the symbolism of Ecclesia, present in the doctrines of baptism as we have seen, and probably implicit also in the free version of the picture. The aspect of Paradise and the elements of a paradisiacal iconography that are incorporated would be a natural concomitant of the four rivers present in the free version and essential to that of the Gospel books, because it is the four rivers, as symbols of the Evangelists, that lend suitability to, and probably inspired, the appearance of the fountain in the set of Canon Tables. For these reasons we must assume that the archetype for the Gospel version somehow symbolized the four rivers, and if we are right in assuming that Jerome's prologue played a role in devising this substitute for the Hypothesis, then the rivers would have been symbolized in the guise of the four harts and the

four jets of water, as the illuminator of the Soissons Gospels has symbolized them.

The second of the two types — that which makes more direct reference, in its forms, to the Holy Sepulcher as the Fountain of Life — seems to have a different chronological history. The Sepulcher itself and the formulation of ideas comparable to those expressed in the chant at the *omphalos* in Jerusalem (*supra*, p. 106), are the points of departure. Since the Sepulcher, in extant representations and in textual references seems not to have been regarded as a type of the Fountain of Life before the end of the sixth century or the beginning of the seventh, I am inclined to believe that the version found in Georgian and Armenian Gospels could not have originated before that time. To assume that the “oriental” type was an integral part of the Canon Tables from the late fourth century would require proof that the Sepulcher itself, only just built over the recently discovered site of Christ’s rock-hewn tomb, had already acquired connotations of a *fons vitae*. Indeed the picture of the Sepulcher as a part of a set of Canon Tables cannot be understood as the Fountain of Life without first presupposing a picture in which the waters of the four rivers were either represented or symbolized, for it is the theme of the water of baptism, issuing from the wound of Christ and distributed throughout the world by the four Gospels that constitutes the bond of doctrinal unity between the two types and provides suitability for its use in a set of Canon Tables.

These considerations suggest the probability, therefore, that the earlier of the two types was more nearly akin to the version found in the Soissons Gospels (the example which summarizes more completely than any other the iconographic content of the Fountain of Life). At a later date, perhaps because of a renewed interest in the Holy Sites at Jerusalem about the beginning of the seventh century²⁷¹ — a new interest that may have produced new ideas regarding their significance — the Sepulcher itself came to be regarded as a type of the Fountain of Life. The tholos on the Hypothesis page of the Canon Tables, similar in form to the *tegurium* of the Anastasis, might readily have commended itself as a vehicle for conveying the life-giving nature of the tomb and the role of the four Gospels in teaching the nations of the world. In adapting the tholos, the Georgian Gospels of Adysh and the Morgan Ethiopic Gospels went further than the Armenian by introducing the grilles from the Sepulcher. The Armenian adaptation,

²⁷¹ Attributable to the shock sustained by Christendom, especially the eastern regions, when the Holy Sites, including the Anastasis, were desecrated and in large part destroyed by the Persians with the aid of the Jews about the year 614?

while leaving the tholos more or less intact, gave it a paradisiacal setting, added the trees in token of its lifegiving qualities and the curtains as emblems of its sacredness.

APPENDIX A

NOTES ON THE SYMPHONIA OF THE EVANGELISTS

In its substitution for the statement of the Hypothesis, the Fountain of Life retained from its predecessor not only the idea of the “harmony” of the Evangelists but also its position with regard to the Canon Tables.²⁷² The Fountain of Life is, among other things, a “harmony” picture in the sense that the Four Gospels, deriving from a common source, go forth to water the universe, purify creation, and teach the nations to worship Christ’s Kingdom.²⁷³ A more simple meaning of their agreement, or concordance, had been conveyed, graphically as well as verbally, by the wreath-enframed Hypothesis. That surely was the connotation of the frontispiece to the Canon Tables of the Codex Rossanensis²⁷⁴ (Fig. 57), in which the medallions of the Evangelists at the four quarters of the wreath were physically joined together by the interlacing bands that define the wreath. Despite the fact that the wreath Hypothesis, like the tholos Hypothesis, acquired rather abstruse symbolic elements that tended to obscure its original connotations, reflections of this general sense of concordance are not altogether lost in subsequent Gospel illumination. For example, the frontispiece of the Georgian Adysh Gospels (A.D. 897) published on Plate III of the *Materialy po arkheologii Kavkaza*, XIV, is surely a modification of the type of the Rossanensis “harmony.” In this frontispiece to the Gospel book as a whole we have something very close to the Rossanensis Hypothesis page.²⁷⁵ A quatrefoil, which probably originally contained the inscription, replaces the circular wreath. The quatrefoil is framed by a square border within whose four corners appear the portrait busts of the Evangelists. The idea is the same as that of the Rossanensis — a physical joining together of the

²⁷² *Supra*, pp. 108 ff., 116 f.

²⁷³ *Supra*, p. 106.

²⁷⁴ *Supra*, p. 109.

²⁷⁵ Without a careful study of the conjugate foliation of the manuscript it would be impossible to reconstruct its original arrangement. But it is probable that the Hypothesis of the Adysh Gospels was originally followed by the letter of Eusebius, the portraits of the Evangelists — Matthew and Mark on separate pages and Luke and John together on another — these followed by a set of Canon Tables terminating with the Fountain of Life, the whole apparatus thus centering about the Canon Tables and contributing to their sense of concordance.

Evangelists around a statement of their concordance — and is thus a “harmony” picture.

Elements of the harmony of the type found in the Rossanensis can perhaps be seen in certain Carolingian and Ottonian versions of the *Maiestas Domini*. For example, on page 36 of the Karlsburg fragment of the Carolingian Lorsch Gospels,²⁷⁶ the enthroned Christ is surrounded by a wide circular frame, reminiscent of the wreath, which includes the four symbols of the Evangelists in large medallions at the four quarters, the same disposition found in the Rossano Gospels. But representations of angels have been added in small squares set into the frame between the Evangelist medallions. The Ottonian Sacramentary of Archbishop Gero (Darmstadt, Landesbibl. Cod. 1948, fol. 5^v),²⁷⁷ however, retains the Evangelist symbols in the same arrangement, omitting the angels.

But a more specifically musical harmony is sometimes attributed to the Evangelists in inscriptions, mostly in verse, that accompany their representations, and in literary sources, chiefly poetry. In some works of art, including one of our Fountains of Life, there may also be implications that the Evangelists, in a figurative sense, were producers of sounds, if not of a cosmic, musical harmony. It would be well to see also whether there were not other pictures in Gospel books in which a harmony of the type expressed in the Fountain of Life was rendered by other pictorial means.

Among the inscriptions that may possibly attribute a musical harmony to the Evangelists is, first of all, the Hypothesis statement itself. As we have seen,²⁷⁸ the Canons represent the *συμφωνία εὐαγγελιστῶν*. Since the word *συμφωνία* is a technical musical term in one of its principal meanings, let us see if its use in the Hypothesis may not have been a metaphorical application of such musical terminology, implying thereby that the Evangelists figuratively produce one of the recognized musical intervals.

Eusebius, who is credited with the invention of the Canon Tables (and who might possibly have provided them with a title), knew of earlier efforts to “harmonize” the Gospels. In his *Ecclesiastical History*²⁷⁹ he makes it known that he was familiar with the effort made in the second century by Tatian to “harmonize” the Gospels by selecting from the testimony of the four and combining them into one. This work, Eusebius says, was given the name *διὰ τεσσάρων*. The selection of this name for a harmony betrays an

²⁷⁶ See A. Goldschmidt, *German Illumination*, I (New York), pl. 39; Boinet, *La miniature carolingienne* (Paris, 1913), pl. 16, B.

²⁷⁷ Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, II, pl. 17, B.

²⁷⁸ *Supra*, p. 108.

²⁷⁹ IV, 29.

adoption of a musical term and requires some explanation.²⁸⁰ Pythagoras, it is supposed, discovered that tones can be measured in space. He, or his pupils, found that musical consonances were determined by the ratios of whole numbers. Thus musical intervals between tones were found to be based upon the difference in length of the strings that produced the tones. These intervals were given the following names by musical theorists: *διὰ πασῶν* (as used in the phrase *ἡ διὰ πασῶν χορδῶν συμφωνία*, concord of the first and last notes), the octave or the difference in pitch between two strings of which one was twice the length of the other, a relation expressible in the ratio 1:2; *διὰ πέντε*, interval of a fifth, in which the strings stand in ratio of 2:3; and *διὰ τεσσάρων* (the *symphonia* that interests us), interval of a fourth with a ratio of 3:4. The consonances on which the Greek musical system was based could thus be expressed in the numerical progression 1,2,3,4. This progression contains not only the simple consonances but also the composite consonances which the Greeks recognized: the octave plus the fifth (1:2:3); and two octaves (1:2:4). It was soon thought that these mathematical ratios displayed also an order or harmony of the cosmos that perhaps pervaded all divine laws of nature. Thus Plato, in the *Timaeus*, found the same harmony in the squares and cubes of the double and triple proportion starting with unity. This led him to the two progressions 1,2,4,8 and 1,3,9,27. According to Plato these numbers and ratios contain all the musical consonances as well as the inaudible music of the heavens and the structure of the human soul.

Much of this musical theory and terminology passed bodily into Latin thought and literature. In the latter part of the fifth century both Boethius and Cassiodorus were familiar with it, the former in a surprising amount of detail.²⁸¹ The latter, however, cites a still earlier Latin treatise on the subject, now lost, by one Albinus.²⁸²

In *Timaeus*, 80, Plato explains that certain simultaneous sounds, "because of the irregularity of the motion they cause within us," are discordant

²⁸⁰ In explaining these terms, I lean heavily upon Rudolf Wittkower's admirable summation of the musical basis for the theories of cosmic order and harmony propounded by Pythagoras, Plato, and others, which so affected the theories of the arts in their quests for divine proportion. Cf. Wittkower, "Principles of Palladio's Architecture," II, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, VIII (1945), 68 ff.

²⁸¹ Boethius, *De musica, libri quinque*, MPL 63, 1167 ff; Cassiodorus, *Institutiones*, II, 5 (*De musica*), R. A. B. Mynors, ed. (Oxford, 1937), 142 ff. Among his authorities Boethius most frequently cites Pythagoras, Archytas, Aristoxenus (*Εἰσαγωγή ἀρμονική*, third century B.C.), Ptolemy (*Ἀρμονικά*, in 3 bks., second century A.D.), Nicomachus (*Ἐγχειρίδιον ἀρμονικῆς*, early second century A.D.).

²⁸² Cassiodorus consulted a manuscript of this author which he says (*loc. cit.*, 149, line 15) was to be found in a library in Rome in his day. See also Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, "Albinus" (5).

(ἀνάρμοστοι), while others, “because of their regularity,” are concordant (σύμφωνοι). The latter sounds “blend one single sensation.” Now the regularity that produces συμφωνία is found in the relations of the whole numbers of the various consonances. Among these is the διὰ τεσσάρων, *symphonia diatessaron quae princeps est*, as Boethius has it.²⁸³ One might thus suppose that Tatian, in producing a blended unity among the Four Gospels, as he thought, adopted as name for his work the musical term that most aptly fitted the consonance produced through the number four.²⁸⁴

There is one curious bit of evidence in support of the suggestion that Tatian’s title *Diatessaron* derived, or at least was thought to derive, from the musical terminology just described. Victor of Capua, in the sixth century, mentions the “harmonizing” work of Tatian in his own work entitled *In evangelicas harmonias Ammonii*.²⁸⁵ It is very interesting and possibly significant that either Victor himself, a scribe copying his work, or the copy which he had seen, entitles Tatian’s work *Diapente*. Obviously διὰ πέντε, as a title for a harmony or concordance of four Gospels is entirely irrelevant, and it is therefore suggestive that the erroneous title should still be given in terms of one of the musical consonances.

Still other attempts to combine the four Gospels into one harmonious whole had been made before Eusebius drew up his Canons. Saint Jerome, in his *Epistola ad Algasiam*,²⁸⁶ says that the Antiochene Bishop Theophilus (ca. 171–183 A.D.) *quatuor evangelistarum in unum opus dicta compingens, ingenii sui nobis monumenta dimisit*. Similarly, the twelfth-century author, Zacharias Chrysopolitanus, in his *Evangelistarum concordia*, tells us that Tatian *compaginavit unum ex quatuor Evangelium*.²⁸⁷ The Latin, in these latter instances, has lost the musical implications of the Greek terminology, for the verbs *compingo* and *compagino*, which mean “join together,” seem to be the Latin equivalents of the non-musical meanings of the Greek ἀρμόζω, a cognate of ἀρμονία. But ἀρμονία too was used in Greek musical treatises as a technical term, so that it may also, like συμφωνία, have been consciously though metaphorically used as a musical term, more or less synonymous to the latter, when referring to the agreement of the four Gospels; for whatever technical distinctions there may have been for the musicologist between these two terms, popular usage seems to have given them a general similarity of meaning.

²⁸³ *De arith.* II, 48, MPL 63, 1156.

²⁸⁴ Tatian, though an Assyrian, might well have been familiar with Pythagorean and Platonic ideas of “harmony,” for he was a disciple of Justin Martyr, who had been, in his youth, a Platonist philosopher and had also contemplated studying under a Pythagorean master.

²⁸⁵ MPL 68, 251.

²⁸⁶ MPL 22, 1020.

²⁸⁷ MPL 186, 37D.

Various Latin authors speak of a harmony of the Gospels supposedly composed by Ammonius of Alexandria.²⁸⁸ It is possible that they mistake the Latin version of Tatian for one by Ammonius.²⁸⁹ But, according to the evidence of Eusebius' letter to Carpianus,²⁹⁰ Ammonius did compose a book in which, in a column or columns parallel to the text of Matthew, he introduced the excerpted equivalent passages from the other Gospels. The exact nature of the "harmony" of Theophilus is unknown, Jerome merely relating that the four Gospels were "combined." Tatian, however, seems to have completely woven the four texts into one, thus producing, in reality, a new Gospel, since the integrity and completeness of all four would have been sacrificed. Eusebius appears to be the only one of the "harmonizers" who preserved the *συμφωνία* of the four separate Gospels (the probable reason for the success of his method), and in effect merely demonstrated it in the Canon Tables.

Reference was made above to the existence of literary sources that attribute a unison among the Evangelists in the production of various types of sounds and to the possible effects those sources may have had, if not upon the actual form of certain miniatures in books of the Gospels, at least upon their iconographic significance and interpretation. It will be recalled that Paulinus' inscription beneath the conch mosaics of his Church spoke of the four rivers of Paradise flowing from the rock (Ecclesia), and said that they symbolized "the Evangelists, living streams of Christ."²⁹¹ In his verses, it should be noted, he further described them as "sonorous springs" (*sonori fontes*), thus indicating that, like the rivers, the Evangelists produced pleasant sounds. A still more pertinent inscription is found in San Marco in Venice. The main portal leading into the nave from the narthex is flanked by four niches, two on either side, in each of which is a mosaic representation of a standing Evangelist.²⁹² A continuous inscription runs around the heads of the four niches. It reads: *Ecclesiae Christi / vigiles sunt quatuor isti / quorum dulce melos / sonat et movet undique caelos.*²⁹³ Not only do the Evangelists again have a close relation to Ecclesia — her guardians — but they produce sweet sounds as they move the spheres. This latter

²⁸⁸ Victor of Capua, *In evangel. harm. Ammonii*, MPL 68, 251; Zacharias Chrysopolitanus, *Evangel. concordia*, loc. cit., 37, who says: "Unum ex quatuor evangelistarum dictis evangelium claro studio composuit Ammonius Alexandrinus . . ."

²⁸⁹ Bardenhewer, *Gesch. d. altkirchl. Lit.*, I, 260.

²⁹⁰ MPG 22, 1276.

²⁹¹ *Supra*, p. 73.

²⁹² Illustrated by S. Bettini, *Mosaici antichi di San Marco a Venezia* (Bergamo, 1944), pl. III.

²⁹³ A. Gayet, *L'Art byzantin* (Ch. Errard, ed.), I, (Paris, 1901), 22. See also Karl Lehmann, "The Dome of Heaven," *Art Bull.*, XXVII (1945), 3.

is of particular interest to us because of the allusion to the Hellenistic theories of cosmic harmony which we have already found to have been expressed in terms of the numbers and ratios of the musical consonances which produced the *symphonia* and which we suggest might have been in the mind of the composer of the Hypothesis inscription.

The inscriptions of San Marco, probably put in place in the twelfth century, do not necessarily represent a “renaissance” of classical antiquity, for the ancient theory of the music of the spheres was not entirely lost in the intervening centuries even in the West. Boethius, for example, in Book I, Chapter 2, of *De Musica*, discusses what he calls *musica mundana* and asks, *Qui enim fieri potest, ut tam velox coeli machina tacito silentique cursu moveatur?*²⁹⁴ Of course, in his work, which is an exercise in purely secular learning, Boethius has no occasion to attribute to the Evangelists musical sound which *movet undique caelos*, as the San Marco verses do. But when one reflects that throughout the earlier Christian era the four Evangelists had been frequently conceived as musicians whose harmony, like that of the rivers of Paradise and the four seasons, pervades the whole world, one wonders whether their association with the cosmic harmony had not occurred long before the twelfth century. Sedulius, for example, after identifying each Evangelist with his beast symbol and attributing sounds to each beast says that “these four princes, singing of Thee with a single voice, of the same number as the seasons, are scattered throughout the wide world.”²⁹⁵ And from the period of our Carolingian manuscripts we have some verses of Alcuin which also contain reference to the celestial or cosmic “sounding forth” of the Evangelists:

Here, with accompanying cherubim, shines the quadriga of God,
Which sounds forth to the world the holy times of Christ.²⁹⁶

The sounding forth of the Gospels by the Evangelists was not always considered to be sweet or melodious. Sometimes the Evangelists thunder, as for example in the inscription accompanying the Canon Tables in the so-called Livinius Gospels of Ghent.²⁹⁷ The verses, written in careful rustic capitals by the same hand that wrote the text, begin: *Mattheus Marcus*

²⁹⁴ MPL 63, 1171D.

²⁹⁵ *Paschale carmen*, I, 355–360, CSEL 10 (ed. J. Huemer), 41, 42:

Quatuor hi proceres una te voce canentes
Tempora ceu totidem latum sparguntur in orbem.

²⁹⁶ *Prologus duplex* in *Biblia sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem*, I (Rome, 1926), 49, vss. 155–156; MGH, *Poetae latini, aevi carolini*, I (ed. E. Duemmler), 291:

Hinc quadriga Dei, cherubin comitante, refulget,
Quae Christi in mundum tempora sacra sonat.

²⁹⁷ W. Köhler, *loc. cit.*, p. 26. See also note 260 above.

Lucas sanctusque Johannes / Vox tonat hunc horum quattuor una simul. Similarly, to turn to a Greek source, Nicholas Mesarites in invoking the aid of the Apostles as he set out to describe their Church in Constantinople, has this to say to Saint John:²⁹⁸ "John, friend of Christ, virginal theologian, thou wast called son of thunder by Him because of the lofty and mighty sound of the science of divine things which was granted to thee, through which thou hast thundered at the ears of unbelievers and dost still thunder today. Give my tongue, too, sweet and pleasing sound, and moisten its dryness with a tiny drop from the waters flowing with life from which thou hast eagerly drunk as thou leanest on the bosom of Christ, the unquenchable spring of very wisdom." Here, of course, the thundering is attributed to John alone, because of the words of Mark (3:17) in which James and John are called sons of thunder. But, I believe, Mesarites betrays a knowledge of the "sweet and pleasing sound" which John produced in concert with the other Evangelists when he begs that John bestow that gift to his tongue too. And it is interesting also that in this connection Mesarites should mention the "waters flowing with life," which somehow are associated in his mind with the gift of music.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the Evangelists are said to be the four trumpets (*tubae*) of the heavenly King. This is found in two of the most celebrated of all illuminated Carolingian manuscripts, the Tours Bibles of Grandval and Vivian, where, as *tituli* for the pictures of the *Maiestas Domini*,²⁹⁹ we have this distich:

Rex micat aethereus condigne sive prophetae
Hic, evangelicae quattuor atque tubae.³⁰⁰

At the beginning of this excursus, mention was made of the existence of pictures exhibiting a general agreement among the Evangelists devoid of any connotations of harmony in a musical sense. In view of the frequent allusions, however, to their musical harmony in literature of the more poetic sort, it is possible that the art of painting may occasionally have been affected by similar ideas. In the Lindisfarne Gospels (VIII c.), for example, the angel and the lion of Matthew and Mark, placed above the portraits

²⁹⁸ A. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche*, II (Leipzig, 1908), 24, 11–16.

²⁹⁹ London, Br. Mus., add. 10546, fol. 352v; Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 1, fol. 329v. See W. Köhler, *Die Schule von Tours* (Berlin, 1933), Plates 52 and 73. See also *idem*, Text I, pt. 1, 397 where he gives the correct foliation for the picture in Vivian, wrongly recorded on pl. 73.

³⁰⁰ Which might be somewhat freely translated:

And here fittingly flash the heavenly king and the prophets,
And the four trumpets of the Evangelists.

of each of these Evangelists, are shown blowing horns or trumpets.³⁰¹ A still more interesting development, and one that might be thought to come closer to the ideas of *symphonia* outlined above, is found in a miniature in the late eleventh century Reichenau manuscript from the Cathedral Treasury of Bamberg (Fig. 64. Bayerische Staatsbibl., Munich, cod. lat. 4454, fol. 54^v).³⁰² Here the standing figure of Christ enclosed within a tree of life is surrounded at the four corners of the page by the four symbols of the Evangelists. The latter are supported in caryatid fashion by female figures which the verses on the opposite page identify as symbols of the four rivers of Paradise. But the interesting point is that these caryatids, symbols of the four rivers and supporters of the Evangelists, are shown in the form of sirens.³⁰³ It might thus be assumed that the sense of this illumination is that the Evangelists have become the successors of the cosmic sirens who were the Platonic musicians of the spheres, and who, to quote Plato,³⁰⁴ "utter one sound, one note" and from whom there was "the concord of a single harmony" (*μίαν ἀρμονίαν συμφωνεῖν*).³⁰⁵

In the light of this tradition, which indicates the harmony of the Evangelists in these varying ways and imparts to them sweet and harmonious sounds, one detail in the full-page miniature of the Fountain of Life of the Soissons Gospels (Fig. 26) might now lend itself to explanation. And in this light there is added confirmation of the identification (*supra*, p. 71 f.) of the four harts as symbols at once of the four rivers of Paradise and of the four Evangelists. It will be noticed that each of the harts has a bell tied about its neck. These might now be viewed as reference to the harmonious sounds produced by the Evangelists as they concur in the truth of their Gospels.

But let us see whether, among Latin Gospel-book frontispieces of the Carolingian period, there were not other pictures conveying a more general,

³⁰¹ E. Millar, *The Lindisfarne Gospels* (London, 1923), pls. XX, XXIV. It is the eagle of John that blows a horn in the Benedictional of Ethelwold, a Winchester School Ms. of the late tenth century. See Werner Weisbach, "Les images des évangélistes dans 'L'Évangélaire d'Othon III'", *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts* XXI (1939), 136.

³⁰² G. Leidinger, *Meisterwerke der Buchmalerei aus Handschriften der Bayerisch. Staatsbibl., München*, p. 26 and pl. 7; *idem*, *Miniaturen aus Handschriften der Bayerisch. Staatsbibl. in München*, VI, pl. 13.

³⁰³ Karl Lehmann, *loc. cit.*, p. 14.

³⁰⁴ Plato, *Rep.*, X, 14. Werner Weisbach, *op. cit.*, in his discussion of the symbols of the Evangelists in certain Ottonian Mss., failed to note that this usage was for the purpose of indicating the harmony of the Evangelists. The illumination from Munich, Ms. 4454, is simply another way of expressing the harmony of the Gospels which more usually took the form of the Christ in Majesty surrounded by Prophets and Evangelists (*infra*, p. 127 ff.).

³⁰⁵ Lehmann's doubt (*loc. cit.*, p. 14, note 105) that there is any connection between the sirens and the combined rivers-of-Paradise-with-Evangelist symbols is perhaps satisfactorily removed if one views the picture as a "harmony" despite the fact that the *erklärendes Gedicht* makes no mention of this aspect of the iconography.

nonmusical, harmony — a harmony in the sense of a common source of inspiration and a concert of action by the Gospels or Evangelists in going forth to the four quarters of the earth. It would not be surprising to find pictures of this sort, as indeed we have already found in the case of the Fountain of Life, in conjunction with or inspired by the usual prefatory material which was almost invariably gathered at the beginning of the Carolingian Gospel manuscripts. These prefaces consisted normally of the following: *Novum opus*, *Sciendum etiam*, *Plures fuisse*, Eusebius' letter to Carpianus, and the Canon Tables, usually, though not always, in that order.³⁰⁶ Now each of these components of the prefatory material contained passages referring to, or was wholly concerned with demonstrating, the unity of the Gospels or the common source of their divine inspiration. The *Novum opus*,³⁰⁷ or preface to the four Gospels written by Jerome and addressed to Pope Damasus, probably upon completion of his revision of the Latin text of the Gospels in 383, first explains his efforts to bring harmony from the chaos into which the text traditions of the Gospels had fallen. But near the end of the preface he speaks of the Eusebian Canons, which he included in his model, and explains their function and use. The *Sciendum etiam*³⁰⁸ seems a wholly unnecessary addition to the apparatus, since in this letter of Jerome, again to Pope Damasus, the form and function of the Canon Tables is once more the subject. In the *Plures fuisse*,³⁰⁹ which often follows, the reasons why there are only four divinely inspired Evangelists is propounded in symbolical terms. The group of four prefaces to the Canon Tables is very often completed by the letter of Eusebius to Carpianus³¹⁰ from which Jerome had derived his exposition of the Canon Tables in the first two prefaces and which, of course, was the original explanatory letter by the composer of the Tables himself. Then come the Canon Tables which are the instrument of concordance and the *raison d'être* for the prefaces. Except for the individual full-page portraits of the Evangelists, which are usually introduced along with a kind of *vita* (Priscillian prologue) and the *capitula* at the beginning of the respective Gospels, most of the other illustrations in a typical Carolingian book of the Gospels appear within the scope of this prefatory material. It would not be surprising therefore to discover that many of these frontispieces were affected by the expressions of

³⁰⁶ Quite often either the *Plures fuisse* or the Letter, or both, were omitted. See the classifications of Beissel, *Gesch. der Evangelienbücher*, p. 329.

³⁰⁷ Text: MPL 29, 557.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 561A, note 1.

³⁰⁹ MPL 26, 15.

³¹⁰ MPL 29, 562.

harmony contained in the prefaces. We have seen that the Fountain of Life was one of these.

It has already been pointed out that the harmony picture of the Fountain of Life traditionally takes its place either at the beginning or at the end of the Canon Tables. The *fons vitae* of the Soissons Gospels stood at the beginning. It is interesting to note now that the above-mentioned Ottonian miniature (Fig. 64), in which Christ stands in a tree of life grasped in his left hand, and in which we noted the curious combination of Evangelists and sirens, is placed at the end of the Canon Tables. It occurs on the verso of the last Canon. Facing it, on the recto of folio 21, are the verses that purport to explain the picture, while folio 21^v is empty. The two folios, 20 and 21, form a gathering and are separated from the Priscillian prologue of Matthew by an empty page. The picture thus takes its place with the Canon Tables and their prefaces which in this manuscript occupy the first gathering — folios 1 to 7.

Perhaps the most frequent and most imposing of the frontispieces within this prefatory setting is the picture of the *Maiestas Domini*, a picture that often has connotations of harmony. Though not a typical *Maiestas*, the full-page miniature (Fig. 65) in the Lothaire Gospels (Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 266, fol. 2^v), presenting the figure of Christ seated upon a globe within a pointed mandorla surrounded by the symbols of the Evangelists, not only displays a relation to the harmony apparatus of a Gospel book in its physical position, but seems also to have been conceived as an illustration of the harmony in the sense that the Evangelists “flow” from one “fountain” or source, for inscribed above and below the picture is the distich:

Quattuor hic rutilant uno de fonte fluentes —
Matthei Marci Lucae libri atque Iohannis.³¹¹

Moreover, this picture stands on the verso facing a poem (fol. 3^r) which introduces Jerome's *Novum opus* whose *incipit*-page (fol. 3^v) is followed by all the usual prefatory texts³¹² and by the Canon Tables.

A different, and somewhat more literal, way of illustrating the “flow” of the Gospels from a common source is found in the so-called Gospels of Saint Gauzelin at Nancy. On folio 2^v (Fig. 66) the same distich that appeared in the Lothaire *Maiestas* is inscribed above and below a simple representation of four sketchily indicated codices of the Gospels placed so as to form the corners of a rectangular figure in whose center is the Chrism. The idea is,

³¹¹ Which might be translated: “Here the four gleam, flowing from one fountain — the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.”

³¹² Cf. W. Köhler, *Die Schule von Tours* (Berlin, 1933), Text vol. I, pt. 1, 404, 405.

clearly, that the four Gospels issue from one fount and spread to the four quarters. This particular distich seems to have been a rather popular *titulus* to pictures that fall generally in the *Maiestas* category. In addition to the Lothaire Gospels, it occurs a second time in the Nancy Gospels (fol. 3^v), in this case in the equivalent to the *Maiestas* – the picture of the Lamb surrounded by symbols of the Evangelists in a lozenge around which are added four medallions containing representations of prophets which are found in the more typical *Maiestas*.³¹³ It should be noted that in the Nancy Gospels both of these reflections of a harmony similar to that of the Fountain of Life occur within the framework of the harmony prefaces. The *Novum opus* commences on the page (fol. 4^r) that faces the picture of the Lamb and its *titulus*.

But there is another page in the same manuscript that again betrays a connection with the Fountain of Life. At the very beginning of the Gospels of Nancy (fol. 1^r),³¹⁴ there is depicted either a book or a case for a book (Fig. 67) with the following explanatory verses:

Hic liber est vitae, hic et fons et origo librorum,
Unde fluit quicquid q[uisqu]is in orbe sapit.³¹⁵

There are at least two instances in which the *Maiestas Domini* appears to be used directly as a frontispiece to the Canon Tables. In the Prüm Gospels (Berlin, Staatsbibl., Theol. lat. fol. 733) the *Maiestas* occupies folio 17^v.³¹⁶ Facing it, on folio 18^r, is the first of the Canon Tables. Now this is the same relation we have found between the Fountain of Life and the first of the Canons in the Soissons Gospels. And it is perhaps an indication of a similarity of meaning between the *Maiestas* and the *Fons vitae* that the Codex Aureus of Saint Emmeram, which copied Soissons in most matters and actually had a Fountain of Life at the head of one of its Canons,³¹⁷ substituted the *Maiestas* for the Fountain of Life on exactly the same folio (fol. 6^v), and faced it with the first of the Canon Tables (fol. 7^r). Perhaps the copyist saw the interchangeability of the two.

While it is true that in many instances the full-page miniatures of the *Maiestas Domini* were placed so as to face the opening of Saint Matthew's

³¹³ *Ibid.*, Plates, pl. 35, c. The same verses also form part of the inscription in the pointed mandorla of the Christ on the Globe of fol. 18^r of the Paris Gospels, lat. 261. *Ibid.*, pl. 118, b.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pl. 35, a.

³¹⁵ Similarly in Trier, *Codex Adae*. Cf. *supra*, p. 49 and note 29.

³¹⁶ See Köhler, *op. cit.*, pl. 93, c.

³¹⁷ See above, note 13.

text,³¹⁸ yet the elements of a harmony picture retained by it repeatedly caused it to take its place in the harmony prologues and to acquire *tituli*, as we have seen, that relate it to the Fountain of Life. It may also be of interest, and possibly of some relevance, to notice that in at least one of the better examples of the *Maiestas* pictures the element of water from the Fountain of Life is suggested. Across the bottom of the splendid picture in the Vivian Bible (Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 1, fol. 329^v) is a narrow band of land that is treated as the banks of a stream with a profusion of plants, perhaps water plants, in which are introduced three birds that are certainly water fowl suggestive of the crane, heron, or ibis.³¹⁹

In the light of the relation of some of these illustrations to the Fountain of Life, especially those of the Nancy Gospels where the codex containing the writings of the Evangelists is called fountain of life whence flows all wisdom (fol. 1^r), and where the four separate volumes are depicted at the four quarters and according to the inscription flow from one fount (fol. 2^v), we should examine, with these things in mind, the celebrated miniature of the four Evangelists in the Gospels of Aix-la-Chapelle³²⁰ (Fig. 68). This miniature should be included, in my opinion, among examples of harmony pictures and should be viewed as a reflection of certain aspects of the iconography of the Fountain of Life rendered, however, in a more pictorial and less symbolic manner.

A study of the conjugate foliation of the first three gatherings of this manuscript will reveal that, like the Fountain of Life, this solitary miniature of the Aachen manuscript is to be considered as an illustration of the Canon Tables. The first gathering³²¹ of three sheets (6 folios) begins with the *Plures fuisse* (fols. 1^v–4^v) followed by the *Novum opus* which carries over to include both sides of the first folio of the second gathering (7^{r-v}), the latter having a total of eight folios. The remainder of the second gathering (fols. 8–14) is composed of thicker vellum. This means that the conjugate

³¹⁸ For example, in the Grandval Bible (London, Br. Mus. add. 10546) it occurs on the verso of fol. 352 where it faces the *Incipit* of Matthew (fol. 353^r). Similarly the “Lamb-*Maiestas*” of the Bamberg Bible (Bamberg, Staatl. Bibl., Msc. bibl. 1, fol. 339^v and 340^r); the Vivian Bible (Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 1, fols. 329^v and 330^r); the Lorsch Gospels (Karlsburg, Bathyanum, fols. 18^v and 19^r), etc.

³¹⁹ The scale of these details is so small that it is necessary to examine a full-size reproduction, such as that provided by Köhler, *op. cit.*, pl. 73.

³²⁰ Cathedral Treasury, early ninth century. So far as I know, this miniature has always been reproduced in mirror reversal. Janitschek etc., *Die Trierer Ada-Handschrift* (Leipzig, 1889), pl. 23 for example, so reproduces it, as do Boinet, *op. cit.*, pl. 60, and A. Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, I, pl. 23. This reversal has been corrected in our reproduction (Fig. 68) so that the Evangelists no longer write with their left hands!

³²¹ I am indebted to both Professor W. Koehler and Professor A. M. Friend for information clarifying the foliation of this Ms.

folios 7 and 14 differ in thickness and are thus cut sheets joined together at the hinge. The third gathering of five folios is, like the first gathering, composed of thin vellum. It begins (fol. 15^r) with the *Argumentum Matthei* (Priscillian prologue to Matthew) and is followed by the *capitula* of Matthew (the short headings that tabulate the contents).³²²

It is very probable then that the original sheet of thin vellum of which folio 7 was a part (the first sheet of the second gathering) was cut in order to introduce into the manuscript the three and one-half sheets of thicker vellum. Now this material on thicker vellum (fols. 8^r–14^v) constitutes an entity in the apparatus of the manuscript – the set of Canon Tables (fols. 8^v–14^r) and the one miniature (fol. 14^v) of the manuscript. The latter thus takes its place with the Canon Tables in one of the two traditional places for Canon Table illustrations among which the Fountain of Life is perhaps the outstanding example.³²³

But turning to the picture itself (Fig. 68), two facts suggest that the miniaturist attempted to render, in a more representational, pictorial manner, some of the content of the symbolism found in the Fountain of Life, to wit, that the Evangelists, like the four rivers of Paradise, spread the Gospel to the whole world. It is suggestive that the setting is a vast rocky landscape divided into four quarters by chasms or ravines that cross one another at right angles. Each quarter of the earth is allotted to an Evangelist. Each is shown in the act of writing his Gospel, the four thus acquiring agreement not only through common action and common inspiration, but also through simultaneity. Moreover, the curious fact that the Evangelists turn their backs to one another and face outward, thus being quite exceptional in violating an artistic principle of pictorial composition,³²⁴ can be viewed as purposive – a method of indicating that the Gospels flow out from a common source to the four corners of the earth. Were one to add an acceptable and precedented *titulus* to this picture, one could do no better than inscribe the distich that appeared twice in the Nancy Gospels, once (Fig. 66) with the picture of the Chrism and the four codices placed exactly as are the

³²² In Latin medieval Mss. variously entitled *tituli*, *breves*, *breviarium*, *capitula*, *capitulatio*. See S. Beissel, *Gesch. der Evangelienbücher* (Freiburg i. B., 1906), p. 331, n. 1.

³²³ The fact that the Canon Tables and their accompanying illustration of the Four Evangelists were painted on heavier vellum than that used for textual material does not mean that they were not made at the same time as the rest of the manuscript. The change in vellum can be explained either by the necessity of using heavier vellum for painting than for text, or by assuming that the two parts were prepared in different workshops.

³²⁴ The related miniature of the Xanten Gospels (Brussels, Bibl. roy., 18723), Boinet, *La Miniature carolingienne*, pl. LX, has the four placed in a row beneath a Christ on a globe, but the two outer figures turn sharply inward, as they do in the typical *Maiestas Domini* (cf. F. Van der Meer, *Maiestas Domini*, Rome, 1938, *passim*).

Evangelists in Aachen, and in the *Maiestas* pictures of the Nancy, Lothaire, and Paris Gospels 261:

Quattuor hic rutilant uno de fonte fluentes —
Matthei Marci Lucae libri atque Iohannis.

APPENDIX B

THE SIX AND THE EIGHT IN BAPTISTERIES AND FONTS:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE ³²⁵

The same combination of forms, octagon and hexagon, whose symbolism has been discussed above (pp. 80–89), occurs also in the structures of baptisteries and their fonts, thereby lending further proof that one of the basic elements in the iconography of the picture of the *fons vitae* is a symbolism of baptism. Although the octagonal baptistery containing an octagonal font is by far the most frequent and widespread among surviving examples, yet the combination of the eight with the six appears frequently enough to indicate an iconographic purpose and tradition in certain regions.

The earliest example of a hexagonal font, but in this instance in a rectangular room, is that of the post-Theodoran North Church (or North Church II) at Aquileia.³²⁶ Built in the same general region in which its Theodoran predecessor must have been situated,³²⁷ it was discovered to consist of a hexagonally shaped parapet enclosure, or pelvis (1.22 m. on a side), surrounding a circular basin. Though no superstructure was found in place, the excavators found a column shaft which could have been a fragment from a *tegurium fontis*.³²⁸

³²⁵ Dölger, *op. cit.*, 1934, p. 182 ff. and Krautheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 29 and note 4, deal briefly with the iconography of a group of baptisteries in which the symbolism of the six and the eight plays an important part. It seems advisable however, to assemble this material here more completely and to pay more attention to the forms and decorations of the *fonts* than has been done elsewhere in order to show the interrelationship of the iconography of the pictorial *fons vitae* and that of the font of baptism.

³²⁶ For a view of this font see *La Basilica di Aquileia* (a cura del Comitato per le cerimonie celebrative del IX Centenario della Basilica), Bologna, 1933, pl. XIX, 2. Plan on pl. CVI. Gerber's hypothesis that the baptistery of the fourth-century Basilica II at Salona (predecessor of the cruciform basilica) was a circular room with an ambulatory surrounding a circular colonnade of eight columns with a hexagonal font in the center is not sufficiently supported by archaeological evidence to be included here. See Gerber, *Forschungen in Salona I: Die Bauten im nordwestlichen Teile der Neustadt von Salona* (Vienna, 1917), p. 81 f. and figs. 155, 156.

³²⁷ The latter's existence is adduced by the discovery of some of the drainage ducts which led to a portion of the space between the two Theodoran basilicas not yet excavated. Its discovery would have made it one of the very earliest known baptisteries in the West, outside the catacombs, for it would date within a generation of the Edict of Milan.

³²⁸ *La Basilica di Aquileia*, p. 281, note 2.

The date of this font and the whole of the North Church II to which it belongs is subject to controversy. The period within which it existed can, however, be narrowed to a little more than a century — from *ca.* 340 to *ca.* 452 A.D. North Church I (Theodorus' building) was destroyed sometime after 337–340. Between its floor mosaics and those of its successor a coin of Constantine II was discovered,³²⁹ thus indicating that North Church II was built after *ca.* 340. How much later is impossible to state, but a most probable *terminus ante quem* for North Church II is the date of the conquest and destruction of Aquileia by Attila in A.D. 452. A date of *ca.* 400 for our first hexagonal font would not be far wrong.

The present eleventh-century Cathedral of Aquileia, built upon the site of the earlier South Church II, still possesses as its baptistery the rebuilt and modified octagonal structure of its predecessor (South Church II) directly in front of it and upon the main axis.³³⁰ At present only one of the eight sides of the baptistery retains its niche, but the structure was originally of the type in which an octagon is inscribed in a square and four niches fill the corners (Fig. 69). The date of this baptistery cannot be earlier than the middle of the sixth century.

Now the interesting point is that the existing font within this octagonal baptistery is a hexagon. It is true that the present font is a nineteenth-century rebuilding, but it probably follows the form of the one it replaced because Bertoli, in the early eighteenth century, described and drew it in much its present form.³³¹

The assumption that the original font of South Church II was hexagonal is strengthened by other examples in the same general region and of similar date. At Grado, scarcely six miles distant, an octagonal baptistery comparable to that of the Cathedral at Aquileia was built a short distance to the north of the sanctuary of the basilica.³³² Excavations conducted in 1928 under the floor of the baptistery revealed, at a depth of *ca.* 2.20 m.,³³³ the

³²⁹ A. Gnirs, *Jahreshefte des österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts*, XIX–XX (1919), 197; Cecchelli in *La Basilica di Aquileia* (1933), p. 152.

³³⁰ The lateral walls of South Church II coincide with those of the eleventh century basilica. Compare plans in *La Basilica di Aquileia*, p. 285, fig. 19 and p. 293, fig. 25.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 101, 102 for references and Bertoli's drawing. Leclercq in *Dict. d'archéol. chrét.*, I, pt. 2, 2666 notes the existence at one time of another hexagonal font within an octagonal baptistery at Cittanova d'Istria. But note that T. G. Jackson, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria* (Oxford, 1887), III, 340, says the font, like the baptistery, was octagonal and had eight columns surrounding it carrying semicircular arches. Seroux d'Agincourt, *Storia dell'arte* (Prato, 1829), Tavole di architettura, pl. 63, figs. 13, 14, gives plan and section where, contrary to Jackson's statement, the font is indicated as a hexagon. The building was destroyed in 1780.

³³² T. G. Jackson, *op. cit.*, III, 413, fig. 125.

³³³ *Guida d'Italia*, Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia (Milan, 1934), p. 212.

mosaic pavements of the sixth century and the hexagonal font covered with revetments of green cipollino. The sixth-century dating of the church is established by the inscriptions found in the pavements of the Cathedral, the diaconicon, and the "schola," which refer to the Patriarch Elias (571–587).³³⁴ The synod of Grado (Nov. 3, 579) was held in the newly erected Cathedral under the presidency of Elias.³³⁵

Again, at nearby Parenzo on the Istrian peninsula, the Basilica Euphrasiana bears remarkable resemblance in plan to that of the South Church at Aquileia; the similar relation of baptistery to basilica is particularly striking.³³⁶ Excavations made in the center of this octagonal baptistery revealed a hexagonal font which still retained fragments of its marble revetments.³³⁷ There seems little doubt that the font should be regarded as part of the baptistery constructed by Bishop Euphrasius after A.D. 524 as part of the general rebuilding of the entire Church. We thus have another sixth-century example of a hexagonal font within an octagonal baptistery in the region at the head of the Adriatic.

The tradition for these forms remained strong in the area for some time, as is seen in the case of the (ninth century?) baptistery of the Cathedral at Pola ³³⁸ (Fig. 70) at the tip of the Istrian peninsula. Here, within a cruciform plan, the hexagonal font was placed beneath the crossing under a lofty lantern. Each of the four openings from the crossing into the arms contains two columns, thus, in effect, surrounding the hexagon with an octagon of eight columns and thus fulfilling the requirements of eight and six.³³⁹

Again, at Zara, a little farther down the Adriatic from Pola, on the Dalmatian coast, we find the curious example of a hexagonal baptistery (Fig. 72), with a deep niche occupying almost the entire width of each of the sides, enclosing an octagonal font.³⁴⁰ This seems merely an inversion of the

³³⁴ G. Calza, in *Notizie degli scavi di antichità*, 1920, 10–14; P. Paschini, *Riv. di archeol. crist.*, XIV (1937), 137–143.

³³⁵ *Cronica de singulis patriarchis nove Aquileie*, in Giovanni Monticolo, *Cronache Veneziane antichissime* (Fonti per la storia d'Italia), Rome, 1890, 5; *Chronicon Gradense*, *ibid.*, 42.

³³⁶ For plan see W. Gerber, *Altchr. Kultbauten Istriens und Dalmatiens* (Dresden, 1912), p. 44, fig. 46.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50, and for view of excavated font, see fig. 55. O. Marucchi, "Le recenti scoperte nel Duomo di Parenzo," *N. Bull. di archeol. crist.* Anno II, 1896, p. 18, states that an earlier baptistery of circular plan was altered to an octagon in the Euphrasian rebuilding of the sixth century. Another case, in southern Noricum, is the octagonal baptistery at Hemmaberge. Its hexagonal font, however, is so poorly adapted to the surrounding floor mosaics as to indicate that the font was originally octagonal. See R. Egger, *Frühchrist. Kirchenbauten im südlichen Norikum*, p. 77, fig. 77; p. 85, fig. 86.

³³⁸ W. Gerber, *op. cit.*, p. 63, fig. 71.

³³⁹ Another hexagonal font in this region is that in the basilica on the Quarnerian island of Oszero. See W. Gerber, *op. cit.*, p. 83, fig. 101.

³⁴⁰ W. Gerber, *op. cit.*, p. 95, fig. 115 and p. 105, fig. 131.

usual arrangement in the region, but it may have been so arranged in order to conform to a Constantinopolitan type.

In 1923, the French, in their excavations in the Mangana quarter of Constantinople,³⁴¹ discovered an antecedent for this most unusual form of building in what they regard as the baptistery of the Church of the Virgin Mary Hodegetria (Fig. 71). Highly irregular in exterior shape, possibly originally a dodecahedron, its interior is a hexagon which carried a masonry dome adorned with mosaics. Five of the six sides consist of great niches or apses; the sixth forms a monumental entrance. At either side of the apse opposite the entrance were circular rooms, and beneath one of these a cistern. Two small hexagonal chambers occupy the mass of masonry between the two apses at either side of the main axis. The building, at some later date, was provided with a semicircular atrium and colonnade as an approach to the main entrance. Within the hexagonal building, but slightly off center, was found a *piscina* of Proconnesian marble blocks. The outer form described a dodecahedron and the interior a hexagon with niches in each side, a repetition of the forms of the plan of the building itself. At the twelve exterior angles, on the top surface of the parapet, were markings and anchor holes for octagonal columns of a *tegurium fontis*. But the excavators found that beneath this hexagonal font, and exactly in the center of the building, was a somewhat smaller brick *piscina* of a masonry that matched the walls of the building itself. This was the original font — and it was octagonal in form with a small niche in the inner face of each side. As at Zara, therefore, we have this example in Constantinople of the reversal of the more usual usage of the six and eight. In view of the conformity of the whole to the iconography of baptism, we should scarcely agree with A. M. Schneider³⁴² that the building is a thermal establishment. Nor does this rather large domed building (forty Byzantine feet from side to side) seem likely to have been a baptistery in the usual sense. It would rather appear to have been a *hagiasma*, one of a series of such buildings in Constantinople serving a cult of the Theotokos in which a sacred spring or fountain figures prominently. Others belonging to the group existed in the Church of the Theotokos of the Spring and in the Church of the Holy *soros* attached to the larger Church of the Theotokos at Blacherne where the Emperor went annually and thrice entered the sacred fountain in a ritualistic bath that was definitely not baptism.³⁴³ Whatever the function of the font at the Hodegetria may have been, it borrowed from the iconography of baptisteries in employing the

³⁴¹ The excavations are officially published in *Recherches françaises en Turquie*, fasc. 2, M. R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, *Le Quartier des Manganes* (Paris, 1939), p. 81 ff.

³⁴² *Byzanz* (Berlin, 1936), p. 90.

³⁴³ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerim.*, II, 12, Bonn (ed. Reiske), 554-556.

octagonal font within the hexagonal building. If it could be established that this structure should be dated from the founding of the Church of the Hodegetria (second quarter of the fifth century) by Pulcheria, sister of the Emperor Theodosius the Younger, we should have here the earliest known use of the combination of six and eight among baptisteries or buildings of similar ritualistic use. Such a date would not be unreasonable in view of the fact that elements which would seem to belong to the period of the addition of the semicircular atrium date in all probability not later than the sixth century and that a coin of Anastasius I (491–518) was found in the excavation.³⁴⁴

That the use of hexagonal fonts within octagonal baptisteries was not limited to the region of the Adriatic is shown in the case of the baptistery at Lomello in the heart of Lombardy.³⁴⁵ While the structure of the baptistery in general conforms to the Lombard type in possessing alternate rectangular and semicircular niches in the walls of the octagon, yet its center was occupied by a remarkably well-preserved *piscina* in the form of a hexagon.³⁴⁶

In Tunisia, at Tabarka, the baptistery (Fig. 73) consists of a domed octagon with a relatively small niche in each side and a column in each angle, while the font is a hexagon.³⁴⁷ This is the only example I have found in Africa that makes the combination of the eight and six, though several examples of hexagonal fonts in square or rectangular baptisteries are to be found. Among the better known is the very well constructed and lavishly decorated baptistery of the basilica of Dermech at Carthage in Tunisia.³⁴⁸ Here in an almost square room, approximately 10 m. by 15 m., is a hexagonal font containing a circular *lacus* surrounded by a *tegurium fontis* of four columns of rose-red Chemtou marble. Around the square *tegurium* was a screen of twelve columns, four on each side (the corner columns are thus counted twice) providing a kind of ambulatory around the central space. Very similar fonts are found elsewhere in Tunisia. In the Carthaginian basilica of Damous El Karita³⁴⁹ a hexagonal basin was covered by a *tegurium* whose four gray stone columns, though no longer *in situ*, have left their

³⁴⁴ Demangel and Mamboury, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

³⁴⁵ G. Chierici, "Il battistero di Lomello," *Rendiconti della Pontif. Accad. Rom. d'Archeol.*, XVII (1940–41), fasc. III–IV, 130, fig. 1 and pl. III.

³⁴⁶ The intonaco on the inner face of the parapet of the *piscina* was decorated by painted lozenges, and inscribed within them was the verse of the Gospel of John 3:5: "Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu," etc. See Chierici, *op. cit.*, 136.

³⁴⁷ P. Gauckler, *Basiliques chrétiennes de Tunisie* (Paris, 1913), pl. XVI.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16 and pl. I.

³⁴⁹ J. Vaultrin, *Les Basiliques chrétiennes de Carthage* (Paris, 1933), p. 41. See also the hexagonal font at Bir-Ftouha, *ibid.*, p. 76.

bases in place. At Sufetula (Sbeitla), the basilica has a hexagonal font in a baptistery very similar in type to that of Dermech, described above.³⁵⁰

So much for hexagonal fonts in North Africa. Examples of hexagonal *teguria* employed to cover fonts of varying forms are also to be found in North Africa, at any rate in Algeria. At Tebessa (Algeria), the Great Basilica and its extensive accessory buildings contain a rectangular baptistery with a circular font about 1.90 m. in diameter surrounded by six plinth blocks which can only be explained as bases for columns.³⁵¹ While this is admittedly not a provable case, there can be no dispute about the *tegurium* in the baptistery of the Northwest Church at Announa (Fig. 74), again in Algeria. In 1903, when it was excavated, five of the six column bases and the lower portions of their column shafts were still in place.³⁵² The parapet upon which the columns rested was circular in its outer edge, but the inner face was formed into a six-lobed figure by the introduction of a small niche within the parapet at each of the intercolumniations.

Judging from the symbolism of numbers, the hexagonal font is an allusion to the sixth day, the day of the crucifixion: *sexta sabbati crucifixo*. Since the cross is the emblem of the sixth day and of the dead body of Christ into which we are baptized (i.e. Ecclesia), and since "we are crucified with Him" in baptism, both the hexagon and the cross are suitable as fonts and synonymous in doctrinal significance. In Tunisia at any rate, where the former was frequently used, the equivalence of the cross and hexagon seems to have been recognized.

At Oued Ramel the baptistery consists of a small detached building just north of the sanctuary end of the basilica. A rectangular building, it is divided into two almost square rooms, with the font placed in the center of the western room³⁵³ (Fig. 75). This font is in the form of an equal-armed cross sunk into the mosaic floor. In the floor of the font, at the crossing of the arms, is the figure of a dove, obviously the emblem of the Holy Spirit invoked at the blessing of the font. From the two edges of the upper vertical arm, and again from the lower, spring two date-palm trees, two extending horizontally to left and two to right.³⁵⁴ Four columns of a *tegurium* were placed around the font. Above the cross of the font, on the floor before the

³⁵⁰ A. Merlin, *Forum et églises de Sufetula*, Gouv. Tunisien. Notes et Documents, V (Paris, 1912), pl. III.

³⁵¹ For plan and section of the font see A. Ballu, *Le Monastère byzantin de Tébessa* (Paris, 1897), p. 20, figs. 11, 12.

³⁵² S. Gsell and C. A. Joly, *Khamissa, Mdaourouch, Announa*. III (1918), 97, fig. 29.

³⁵³ For plan, and drawing of the representations in the mosaic floors surrounding the font, see P. Gauckler, *op. cit.*, pl. XVIII.

³⁵⁴ One is reminded of the motif, so common on the Ravenna sarcophagi, of the cross flanked by date palms.

entrance to the eastern room (Consignatorium?), is a cantharos flanked by two birds (peacocks?), a familiar motif in North Africa. At the opposite end of the baptistery, in the floor before what must have been the entrance to the building, is the mosaic representation of what appears to be a fountain from which issue the four rivers of Paradise. On either side of these, two harts are shown drinking of their waters. The cross of the font seems to rest upon the fountain, as though upon a mound, and the presence of the rivers and the harts again calls to mind the analogy we made to the familiar representations of the cross and the four rivers of Paradise in connection with the illumination of the *fons vitae* in the Soissons Gospels (cf. p. 72 f. above) and the reference to them by the author of the *Plures fuisse*.

But the cruciform font at Oued Ramel is not an isolated specimen. Another African example, an almost exact counterpart but without the surrounding mosaics, is the font at Meninx (Henchir Bourmedès).³⁵⁵ An even more interesting example is the baptistery attached to the Episcopal Church at Salona (Fig. 76), to get back again to the coastal region of northern Dalmatia. Here the baptistery runs the whole gamut of symbolization of the "three most sacred days." The exterior of the building was formed into an octagon. Within it, in the circular interior, seven columns stood slightly detached from the wall, while the significance of the sixth day is brought out in the form of the font, here again an equal-armed cross.³⁵⁶

Cruciform fonts are not unknown in Syria and Palestine. One, carved from a single block of stone, was found in the square room which forms the southern extension to the narthex of the principal church at Deir Solaib.³⁵⁷ Others have been found at Ammwas (Emmaus),³⁵⁸ Tyr in Phoenicia,³⁵⁹ and Beit Aûwa.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁵ P. Gauckler, *op. cit.*, pl. XXXII. Still another Tunisian example is that at Thuburbo Majus. See L. Poinssot and R. Lantier, "L'archéologie chrétienne en Tunisie (1920-1932)," in *Atti del IIIo congresso internazionale di archeologia cristiana: Ravenna 1932* (Rome, 1934), p. 406, fig. 16.

³⁵⁶ See Dyggve, *ibid.*, p. 247, fig. 13, for a plan of what the author calls Baptistery I and dates in the first half of the fifth century. It should be noted that two of the seven columns appear in plan to be markedly smaller in diameter than the others, and to be spaced closer together. This may indicate that originally there were six columns. For the combination of a cruciform font with an octagonal baptistery, see the notice of the recent early Christian discoveries on the island of Cos in *BCH*, 71-72 (1948), 444 and fig. 20, p. 443.

³⁵⁷ J. Mattern, S.J., *Villes mortes de Haute Syrie* (2nd ed., Beyrouth, 1944), plan, pl. LIV; view of font, pl. LVIII, fig. 2.

³⁵⁸ Vincent and Abel, *Emmaüs* (Paris, 1932), p. 237 ff.; pl. XVII.

³⁵⁹ Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dict. d'archéol. chrét.* II, pt. 1, 435, fig. 1346. J. N. Sepp, *Meerfahrt nach Tyrus zur Ausgrabung der Kathedrale mit Barbarossa's Grab* (Leipzig, 1879), p. 258, thought this cruciform font belonged to the fourth century church described by Eusebius. If so, it is the earliest known baptismal font. This dating, however, is much to be doubted.

³⁶⁰ Cabrol and Leclercq, *loc. cit.*, p. 456, fig. 1369.

Occasionally the whole baptistery is built in the form of a hexagon, as at Constantinople (Fig. 71), Zara (Fig. 72), or Deir Seta in Syria, where the font was also a hexagon surrounded by six columns.³⁶¹ Indeed if one were to eliminate all reference to the six and the eight and the cross in the vocabulary of the architecture of baptisteries, one would find very few left on a list of Early Christian and Medieval baptisteries. In many central-type Early Christian churches the same repertory of forms was used, a fact that suggests the probability that the symbolism of the divine plan of redemption had been consciously applied to churches as well as to baptisteries. The conclusion can only be that the architects too felt the need to express something of the doctrinal significance of the sacraments in an iconography which made use of numbers.

³⁶¹ De Vogüé, *La Syrie centrale. Architecture civile et religieuse*, II, pl. 117.